Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
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1 DAY without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Nat'l Day

China kicked off its National Day celebrations by highlighting its hosting of the Beijing Olympics and the country's first spacewalk.

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On A Limb

Leonardo DiCaprio didn't realize he was in over his head until it was too late.

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BEH recalls candy found to contain melamine. **PAGE 3**
House panel set to unveil budget plan for FY09. **PAGE 5**

Records: PSS owes CUC $1.2M

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System owes the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. nearly $1.2 million in overdue payments, based on records obtained by the *Saipan Tribune* via the Open Government Act.

Education Commissioner Rita Sablan earlier said that, according to their records, the school system does not owe CUC any money, but CUC executive director Antonio Muña has repeatedly said PSS owes $1.8 million in past debt. That money, along with $1.6 million that the central government owes CUC,

See RECORDS on Page 4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio is presented with a Shanghai Airlines toy plane during the inaugural Shanghai-to-Saipan flight at the Saipan International Airport Monday morning.

First Shanghai-to-Saipan flight arrives

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

The first flight of Shanghai Airlines' new Shanghai-to-Saipan service arrived at the Saipan International Airport in the predawn darkness Monday morning, a debut that comes ahead of several airline deals that tourism officials hope will draw more foreign visitors to the CNMI.

After Shanghai Airlines' nearly full

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NEW SHANGHAI FLIGHTS

- **Shanghai–Saipan:** Monday and Friday 7:45pm – 2:15am
- **Saipan–Shanghai:** Tuesday and Saturday 3:15am

Slater

Saipan resident shot dead in Cincinnati

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A mechanical engineer assigned to a military ship on Saipan was shot dead by suspected carjackers in Avondale, Cincinnati, early Sunday morning

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Bailout bill defeat could cause painful recession

RELATED NEWS

- House rejects $700B bailout in stunning defeat. **PAGE 14**
- Dow plummets record 777 as financial rescue fails. **PAGE 14**
- House vote against bailout wounds McCain. **PAGE 15**

By JEANNINE AVERSA
AP ECONOMICS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The fallout from the vote against a bailout package for the U.S. financial system may well be lasting pain for the economy.

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Local

House panel set to unveil budget plan for FY09

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration has accused lawmakers of trying to pass the buck on making necessary cuts in the fiscal year 2009 budget.

The House Ways and Means Committee will unveil today its proposed budget, which includes a $79.2 million lump-sum appropriation for the Executive Branch. Under the measure, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial could allocate the funds in any way he pleases.

The governor's spokesperson called the proposal "an attempt to abdicate responsibility for making the very difficult and painful decisions that urgently need to be made."

"It seems that some in the Legislature may wish to pass this enormous responsibility off to the Governor for political cover, so that the Governor would be blamed for doing what needs to be done, but which nobody wants to do. It would be better if the decisions were made jointly and responsibly," said press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr.

He also said that Fitial regrets not having a budget passed for FY2009, which begins today, or even for the fiscal year that ended yesterday. The governor previously submitted a budget that included austerity measures, but the Legislature, Reyes said, "did not act to make the tough and unpopular financial decisions, which may leave us worse off."

Rep. Victor Hocog, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said he is surprised the administration opposes having full authority over the budget of the Executive Branch.

"If they had given us more resources [to appropriate], it wouldn't be like this," Hocog said. "But given the limited resources, we believe it would be in the best interest of the Executive Branch to be able to manage its own funds."

The government budget for FY2009 is $156.7 million. This excludes $3 million for the Department of Public Lands, whose income can only be used for its own operations and for investment by the Marianas Public Land Trust.

In addition to the $79.2 million for the Executive Branch, the proposed budget includes funding for the Public School System, $38.2 million; Northern Marianas College, $6.2 million; Rota municipality, $8.5 million; Tinian municipality, $8.4 million; Saipan municipality, $2.1 million; Legislature, $6.5 million; Judiciary, and $4.3 million; Washington Representative's Office, $209,000; and other programs.

Hocog said the proposed budget contains no austerity provisions such as the so-called austerity Fridays and unpaid holidays, which directly impact the income of government employees.

Instead, he said, the measure proposes to cut each lawmaker's budget from $155,000 to $105,000. "There was a heated discussion about this. But I had everybody calm down and support the reduction," Hocog said.

The proposed $50,000 cut against each lawmaker's budget would save the government a total of $1.45 million. The House of Representatives has 20 members and the Senate has nine members.

October is Energy Awareness Month

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno Fitial yesterday proclaimed October as Energy Awareness Month, a particularly important issue for the CNMI with the current power situation.

During the proclamation Fitial reiterated the process for the CNMI to achieve affordable and reliable power.

A request for proposals to rehabilitate two of the engines at Power Plant 1 has closed and the $3.5 million project is going to be fast tracked in order to get the engines on line as fast as possible, he said. Not all of the four engines currently offline at the power plant will be rehabilitated, though, because "they are ready to be placed in a museum permanently," he said.

An independent power producer will come in and take over the power generation, while the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will continue power distribution.

"I want this government to get out of that [power generation] business, because we don't know anything about power generation," he said. "We're very good at pretending to know…we'll leave the generation to experts."

Fitial is looking at other renewable energy sources, including coal and geothermal.

Last week, workers from China came to the CNMI to demonstrate a new technology that sequesters the emissions from coal, he said. The CNMI has received grants from the Department of the Interior to assess the possibility of geothermal energy for the Commonwealth.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Energy officials in the Commonwealth join Gov. Benigno R. Fitial during yesterday's proclamation signing, declaring October as Energy Awareness Month.

"Geothermal is not only reliable and sustainable but very cheap, so that is going to be our future," he said.

To go along with energy awareness, Fitial is joining governors from across the United States in declaring today Energy Star Change a Light Day. Citizens are encouraged to switch to light fixtures or bulbs that have earned the Energy Star label. The label designates products that meet energy efficient guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

If every citizen in the CNMI changes one light bulb, some 3.7 million kWh of energy could be saved and 5.65 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions reduced.

At yesterday's signing, Fitial also declared October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Felipe
Norita Quitugua Atalig
for U.S. Congress

Goals & Objectives

★ **CIP Funds:** Immediately remove CIP matching requirement to allow CNMI to purchase new generators from existing unmatched CIP funds

★ **Inclusion of CNMI in US Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990:** $ I 00,000 for individual patient with Cancer, Thyroid, Leukemia and other illnesses.

★ **Healthcare:** Increase Medicaid funding and remove local matching requirement so that more indigenous CNMI residents have access to adequate health care.

★ Quality Medical Care: Granting of Special Rural designation so that the CNMI can avail of cheaper quality drugs and medical services from countries offering comparable quality for less money.

★ Compact-impact accountability and Just compensation

★ **Environmental Contamination Cleanup:** Increase funding to survey and cleanup contaminated areas.

★ **US Postal and State and Zip Code Identity:** Mandatory inclusion of MP and 670 and 96950 in all business database across the United States

★ **Workforce Development and Retention:** Increase funding and eligibility of technical and post secondary training with necessary changes that ensures training and permanent employment of our youths.

★ **Public Safety:** Increase funding & training to our Police Officers and other Law Enforcement Officers. To be able to provide the best equipment and tools to ensure our safety.

★ **Extension of Submerged Land Ownership:** work with US Congress to recognize and respect the ownership of submerged lands inclusive of all minerals and marketable resources.

★ **War Reparation:** Revisit the War Reparation Statute to ascertain completeness and fairness of compensation to individuals and families of war victims.

BEH recalls candy found to contain melamine

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental Health has directed two wholesalers and 10 retail outlets on Saipan to remove White Rabbit candies from their shelves after the manufacturer recalled the candy because it contained melamine.

The recall is the latest development in the melamine scandal that has killed several babies in China and sickened thousands.

Melamine is an organic base chemical most commonly found in the form of white crystals rich in nitrogen. It is widely used in plastics, adhesives, countertops, dishware and whiteboards.

BEH has visited and inspected more than 70 stores on Saipan, Tinian and Rota to screen Chinese imports. Inspectors have confirmed that milk powder found in "Mr. Brown 3-in-1" instant coffee has not been imported to the CNMI. Health officials in Guam recalled the coffee last week after traces of melamine were found in the product.

The White Rabbit candies found to contain melamine were distributed to the states of California, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Texas and Washington.

Chinese baby formula tainted with melamine has been blamed for the deaths of four infants and the illness of 53,000 others in China. Health experts say ingesting a small amount of the chemical poses no danger, but melamine can cause kidney stones and lead to kidney failure. Infants are particularly vulnerable.

LAPD detectives' arrival to pick up Miura may be known today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI government has no information yet regarding the arrival date of the Los Angeles Police Department detectives who will pick up Kazuyoshi Miura from the Department of Corrections.

A staff at the Attorney General's Office's Criminal Division told *Saipan Tribune* that acting chief prosecutor Jeffery Warfield Sr. had stated that as of yesterday he doesn't have information about the arrival of the LAPD detectives.

The staff said Warfield hinted that the day of the arrival may be known today, Wednesday.

Press secretary Charles Reyes Jr. said it was Sunday in L.A. when Miura withdrew his petition for a writ of habeas corpus.

Reyes said the AGO just informed the L.A. District Attorney's Office yesterday about Miura's situation now on Saipan.

After fighting his extradition to California for more than seven months, the 61-year-old Miura threw in the towel Monday, vowing to continue his fight in L.A.

Attorney Bruce Berline, one of Miura's lawyers, informed the federal court that they want to withdraw the petition for habeas corpus.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson granted the motion.

Berline said that, with the dismissal of the petition, LAPD is now free to come and escort Miura to California.

14 Guam soldiers deploy to Afghanistan

GUAM—Members of the Guam Army National Guard are scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan today, Oct. 1, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The 14 soldiers will be augmenting the 33rd Brigade Combat Team from North Carolina for approximately 18 months. They will also be participating in Mobilization Station training at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina before heading to Afghanistan.

A send-off ceremony was scheduled to take place yesterday at 2pm at the Guam National Guard's 105th Troop Command Bldg., Guam Army Guard's Barrigada Complex.

Five members of the group have deployed previously to Afghanistan, Iraq and the Horn of Africa. The team will be providing a variety of duties to include the Task Force Engineer commander, personnel support, logistics support, medical support and security forces.

Today, there are over 200 Army Guard soldiers deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving the nation abroad in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Philippines. ***(PR)***

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Commerce eyes revival of biz incubator program

The Department of Commerce is eyeing a plan to revive a program that once operated in the CNMI designed to fostering the growth of small local businesses.

In an interview Tuesday, Commerce Secretary Michael Ada disclosed plans to work with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Commonwealth Development Authority to revive the Small Business Development Center, a program that once operated out of the Northern Marianas College and is credited with helping several entrepreneurs get their businesses started.

"This is to help develop businesses so they can get on their own and then get out and get started," Ada said.

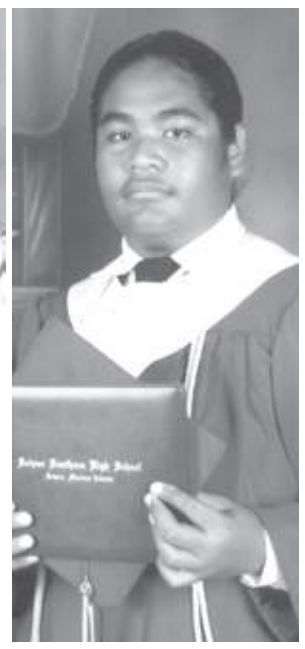
The center would provide assistance to entrepreneurs such as access to fax and Internet services, temporary office and meeting space and other resources, Ada added. He plans to send a letter on the issue to the officials who would be tasked with funding the program under the Pacific Island Small Business Development Center Network, a program operated out of the University of Guam, he said.

Currently, he noted, the CNMI and Ponhpei are the only two Pacific island regions that are not taking part in the PISBDCN's program.

"My goal is to get this thing opened up as soon as possible," he said. "They seem open to it." ***(Stefan Sebastian)***

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy 18th birthday to Mario Kaipat, shown here when he was in sixth grade and in 12th grade. Greetings come from Mom, Dad, brothers, sisters, and the Sofang family.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Happy birthday to my beloved husband, Kevin Taitano Kapileo! Greetings come from your wife, Jocelyn.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy fifth birthday to Evan Jay R. Borja. From Mommy and Daddy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Removal of man's electronic monitoring OK'd

A defendant who already entered a guilty plea in an "ice" trafficking case yesterday requested the federal court to remove the electronic monitoring from him as his only available possible third-party custodian has no electricity at the house.

The U.S. government, through assistant U.S. attorney Beverly McCallum, did not object to the modification of Lawrence Sablan Kalen's bail condition.

McCallum also had no objection to the proposed new third-party custodian who has no electricity.

Having no objection, U.S. District Court for the NMI chief judge Alex R. Munson granted Kalen's request.

At the bail modification hearing, Bruce Berline, lawyer for Kalen, urged for a new third-party custodian for his client.

Berline said the only available custodians, however, have no electricity in their homes.

This, Berline said, would not allow for Kalen's electronic monitoring.

On Aug. 28, 2008, Kalen pleaded guilty to one count of distribution and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine or "ice." He is awaiting sentencing.

Lawrence Kalen; Greggory Kalen also known as G, Goro, and Greggory Sablan Kani; and Manuel A. Sablan, also known as Manny Sablan, were indicted on one count of conspiracy to distribute "ice", and two counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute "ice."

According to the indictment, the three defendants conspired to distribute "ice" on Dec. 1 to 13, 2007.

On Dec. 1, the defendants allegedly distributed 0.17 grams of "ice" and on Dec. 13 distributed 0.10 grams of "ice."

Greggory Kalen had also already pleaded guilty to distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance. His sentencing was set for Oct. 8. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

BAILOUT

From Page 1

The House's stunning defeat of a $700 billion package urgently championed by President Bush, sent shock waves through Capitol Hill, the trading floors on Wall Street and the Oval Office on Monday.

"An economic 9/11," warned Terry Connelly, dean of Golden Gate University's Ageno School of Business, of the potential fallout. As the package went down, panicked investors caused the Dow Jones industrials to nosedive nearly 780 points in their largest one-day point drop ever. Markets across Asia fell sharply Tuesday in the wake of the Wall Street downdraft.

Lawmakers defeated the legislation by a 228-205 vote, although Democratic and Republicans leaders and Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson all pledged to keep working for a package acceptable to all sides.

In the meantime, the economic wreckage that the administration and Congress have warned about—rising unemployment, shrinking nest eggs and prolonged recession—might not happen immediately, but that doesn't mean it won't happen at all.

"This is like the advice you get from the doctor who says you should quit smoking," said Robert Brusca, chief economist at Fact and Opinion Economics in New York. "You know he's right. But if you don't, you're not going to die tomorrow and you're not going to die next week. But at some time, it's probably going to get you."

For now, Treasury was expected to work with other government agencies, including the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., to deal with problems on a case-by-case basis.

"Our tool kit is substantial but insufficient" without a bailout, Paulson warned.

There are some steps the Federal Reserve can take to cushion damage from the worst credit crisis since the Great Depression.

FIRST

From Page 1

222-seat Boeing 767 touched down, officials with the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino greeted the arriving passengers and crew. A leading MVA official has said that the flights could draw millions of tourism dollars to the CNMI. The flights come after the suspension of chartered airline service from Shanghai to Saipan last year.

"We welcome the reinstatement of flights from Shanghai," said Perry Tenorio, the MVA's managing director. "Also, we welcome this new carrier to Saipan."

Direct airline service along the Shanghai-to-Saipan route could lend a significant boost to the Tinian Dynasty, which caters to many Chinese visitors to the CNMI, and other local hotels.

Moreover, the CNMI's tourism sector stands to see some gains in the near future through other flight deals, such as a potential Russia to Saipan charter service arrangement through the Khabarovsk-based air carrier Dalavia and Asiana Airlines' soon to commence service from Osaka, Japan to Saipan. Asiana's new flights are due to begin in October, Tenorio noted.

"We're expecting charters through the end of the year," he said.

According to an MVA statement, the new flights will reach Saipan twice weekly, departing from Shanghai's Pudong airport at 7:45pm every Monday and Friday and arriving on Saipan at 2:15am every Tuesday and Saturday. Return flights are scheduled every Tuesday and Saturday at 3:15am from Saipan to Shanghai.

However, MVA is eying one possible obstacle to the expansion of airline services to the CNMI from key Asian tourism markets; the pending federal takeover of local immigration rules and the establishment of a joint Guam-CNMI visa waiver program, which will admit foreigners from pre-approved nations into the United States without the need for a visa.

"That continues to be a concern until we know [The Department of Homeland Security] has made its final decisions on which countries will be included in the program." Tenorio said, noting that local authorities are vying to see Russia and China take part in it.

DHS' decision on the visa waiver program, he added, will likely guide the MVA's marketing efforts in the future.

RECORDS

From Page 1

is going to help pay for the $6 million emergency Aggreko generators, Muña said. A payment of $504,000 is due to Aggreko in less than two weeks. Muña said he hopes to have the money from PSS and the government this week.

According to PSS records, the school system owes CUC $1,192,289.34 for fiscal year 2008. The number does not include the month of September.

PSS is disputing another $300,000 that the school system believes it has been overcharged.

According to their records, PSS owes a balance of:

- $42,433.81 for the month of April;
- $323,536.72 for the month of May;
- $370,885.18 for the month of June;
- $313,707.02 for the month of July; and
- $141,726.61 for the month of August.

Representatives from PSS had earlier said they paid CUC $173,000 for the month of August.

Altogether, PSS paid CUC $2,473,551.91 for fiscal year 2008, not including the month of September. This figure includes $1.6 million that was reallocated from PSS's budget to CUC after Finance Secretary Eloy Inos gave permission for the transfer.

Then PSS acting education commissioner Craig Garrison said the transfer was "underhanded." Garrison said he was open to transferring excess funds to CUC after both parties calculated and compared their numbers. But, Garrison said, that never happened and funds were transferred without his knowledge. Inos earlier said he looked at the projected payroll through the end of the year and saw there were funds available to transfer. He added that he followed up with Garrison through an email.

In an e-mail to CUC acting chief financial officer Joanne Paraiso dated July 15 and obtained through the Open Government Act, Muna wrote that Inos "has advised that we apply 1.6 MM wire transfer to our account on or about 6/28/08 to PSS' outstanding account balance."

SAIPAN

From Page 1

(Cincinnati time).

Woodrow Wilson Slater, 43, was transported to University Hospital in Ohio where he died from gunshot wounds, according to news reports from Cincinnati.

Reports said police were called to the 700 block of South Fred Shuttlesworth Circle at 3:30am where they found Slater who had been shot.

The suspects reportedly stole the victim's rental car, a silver 2009 Dodge Avenger. Three men were last seen aboard the vehicle, traveling north on Reading Road from South Fred Shuttlesworth Circle. Monday, Cincinnati District Four Police reportedly recovered the vehicle.

Slater, who would have turned 44 in November, was from Mobile, Alabama. The family is quoted by Fox News as saying that Slater had lived on Saipan for 10 years.

Slater was employed with Honeywell Technology Solutions Inc. in Florida and assigned at M/V *Bonnyman* on Saipan, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

Slater had just married his girlfriend, Baby Gonzales Slater, on Jan. 10, 2008. Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela officiated the civil wedding.

In an interview at their home in Finasisu, Mrs. Slater told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that she was shocked and devastated when her father-in-law, who is in Alabama, informed her about her husband's death Sunday at 11:26pm.

"My whole body was shaking. I couldn't understand my feeling," said Mrs. Slater in Tagalog.

After talking with her father-in-law, she called the Cincinnati Police Department where she was able to confirm the incident.

Mrs. Slater said police told her that her husband had two gunshot wounds—one on the arm and one on the chest.

She said when he left Saipan, he was carrying $1,700 cash, but only $200 was recovered from his body.

She said her husband left Saipan last Saturday (Saipan time) to visit Jim Maddox, his best friend and former co-worker on Saipan.

Mrs. Slater said her husband called her last Sunday at 6:30pm to inform her that he was already in Cincinnati and that he would just shower then he and Maddox would watch football.

She said the shooting apparently happened after he dropped Maddox back at his house.

"It was the second time he visited his best friend. I don't know why but this time I tried to stop him from leaving," she said.

She said Slater was planning to buy a new car and that next year he would bring her to Florida where they would settle down.

Mrs. Slater said the American Red Cross has been helping her process her papers so she could obtain a visa and attend her husband's burial in Alabama either this week or next week.

"I hope the suspects will be caught so we can obtain justice," she said.

A neighbor of the couple recalled that Slater was a kind man who loved pottering about and tending to a small garden behind his apartment.

Bill seeks to close loophole on housing benefits

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

A lawmaker has authored a measure to close a legal loophole that allows key officials to receive housing benefits even while they continue living in their private houses.

Under the bill, pre-filed by Vice Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero, key officials who opt to reside in their own homes, instead of in government housing, will be ineligible to receive housing benefits, including free utilities.

The bill would apply to the governor, lieutenant governor, Senate president, and the House speaker. Theoretically, all four officials are eligible for government housing. But in practice, only the governor and lieutenant governor receive this benefit.

The measure follows a recent report about Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez's skyrocketing power consumption. According to a KSPN2 report, Villagomez's family used to consume 1,700 kWh of power before he became lieutenant governor. His power usage soared after his election, reaching 5,000 kWh about two months ago.

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, who is not receiving government housing benefits, said he would support the bill. "I think it's a good policy to impose upon ourselves," he said.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the administration would have to review the intent and merits of the bill. "If the intent is to save money, such a bill might skew incentives. For example, it might compel an official to spend money for the repair and renovation of official government housing in order to avail of certain benefits, including utilities, which would cost more," he said.

Reyes also suggested that the proposed restriction might discourage qualified individuals from running for office. "Is this bill just directed at the governor's? If so, would it limit the pool of interested gubernatorial candidates and deprive the CNMI of the best executives?" he asked.

For her part, Rep. Tina Sablan called Deleon Guerrero's bill "a good first step in the right direction."

"The current law does not explicitly authorize the governor, lieutenant governor, House speaker, and Senate president to enjoy these benefits if they opt not to live in government housing. This administration and past administrations have interpreted the law to mean that they could, but frankly I think that's a stretch, and I think there is widespread public sentiment that they shouldn't, especially in these times of austerity," Sablan said.

But she also said that, "We should not stop at only this one perk. The vice speaker's bill is a good first step in the right direction. It should not be the last."

She pointed to the official perks currently enjoyed by many lawmakers on taxpayers' dime. The vehicle leases, gas cards, and cell phone bills of all the members combined "actually add up to more per month than the governor and lieutenant governor's utility bills," she said.

Bennett asks Fitial to name him BOE teacher rep

Former Board of Education teacher representative Ambrose Bennett has written to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, asking the governor to appoint him as the acting and temporary teacher representative to the BOE.

In the letter, Bennett said Fitial has given teachers their constitutional right to organize and select their representative "on a silver platter adorned with olive branches yet [the Association of Commonwealth Teachers] has not responded to your request nor have teachers as whole been given any information about this historic turn of events from ACT."

Bennett in the letter said he would step down once a replacement is elected.

He said he would only need to sign up 50 percent plus one teacher with a representative at every school in order to meet the constitutional requirement for "an exclusive bargaining representative of teachers within the Public School System."

In August, ACT presented a letter to Fitial asking for the appointment of ACT president Betty Miller to the role of BOE teacher representative. According to the letter, three separate elections were held for teachers within the entire school system to vote for a representative, and each time Miller won.

Board of Education chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita said she would need to read Bennett's letter before she commented. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

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9. Atalig Felipe Norita Quitugua

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MELL SINGAPORE	015E	9/20 Sat	9/18 Thu	9/18 Thu	9/16 Tue	9/13 Sat	9/26 Fri	9/22 Mon	9/21 Sun	9/14 Sun	9/14 Sun	9/22 Mon	9/26 Fri	9/27 Sat	9/30 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	023E	9/27 Sat	9/25 Thu	9/25 Thu	9/23 Tue	9/20 Sat	10/3 Fri	9/29 Mon	9/28 Sun	9/21 Sun	9/21 Sun	9/29 Mon	10/3 Fri	10/4 Sat	10/7 Tue
MELL SENOKO	011E	10/4 Sat	10/2 Thu	10/2 Thu	9/30 Tue	9/27 Sat	10/10 Fri	10/6 Mon	10/5 Sun	9/28 Sun	9/28 Sun	10/6 Mon	10/10 Fri	10/11 Sat	10/14 Tue
MELL SINGAPORE	016E	10/11 Sat	10/9 Thu	10/9 Thu	10/7 Tue	10/4 Sat	10/17 Fri	10/13 Mon	10/12 Sun	10/5 Sun	10/5 Sun	10/13 Mon	10/17 Fri	10/18 Sat	10/21 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	024E	10/18 Sat	10/16 Thu	10/16 Thu	10/14 Tue	10/11 Sat	10/24 Fri	10/20 Mon	10/19 Sun	10/12 Sun	10/12 Sun	10/20 Mon	10/24 Fri	10/25 Sat	10/28 Tue
MELL SENOKO	012E	10/25 Sat	10/23 Thu	10/23 Thu	10/21 Tue	10/18 Sat	10/31 Fri	10/27 Mon	10/26 Sun	10/19 Sun	10/19 Sun	10/27 Mon	10/31 Fri	11/1 Sat	11/4 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SINGAPORE	015E	10/4 Sat	10/5 Sun	10/5 Sun	SKIP	10/9 Thu	10/10 Fri	10/11 Sat	10/14 Tue	10/17 Fri	10/18 Sat	10/23 Thu	10/21 Tue	10/19 Sun	10/22 Wed
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MELL SENOKO	011E	10/18 Sat	10/19 Sun	10/19 Sun	SKIP	10/23 Thu	10/24 Fri	10/25 Sat	10/28 Tue	10/31 Fri	11/1 Sat	11/6 Thu	11/25 Tue	11/23 Sun	11/5 Wed
MELL SINGAPORE	016E	10/25 Sat	10/26 Sun	10/26 Sun	10/28 Tue	10/30 Thu	10/31 Fri	11/1 Sat	11/4 Tue	11/7 Fri	11/8 Sat	11/13 Thu	12/2 Tue	11/30 Sun	11/12 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	024E	11/1 Sat	11/2 Sun	11/2 Sun	SKIP	11/6 Thu	11/7 Fri	11/8 Sat	11/11 Tue	11/14 Fri	11/15 Sat	11/20 Thu	12/9 Tue	12/7 Sun	11/19 Wed
MELL SENOKO	012E	11/8 Sat	11/9 Sun	11/9 Sun	11/11 Tue	11/13 Thu	11/14 Fri	11/15 Sat	11/18 Tue	11/21 Fri	11/22 Sat	11/27 Thu	12/16 Tue	12/14 Sun	11/26 Wed

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Foreclosures impact CNMI homeowners

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

As families on America's mainland continue to lose their homes amid a national foreclosure crisis, the CNMI apparently is suffering from a gradual foreclosure meltdown of its own linked to the region's economic downturn.

Statistics on foreclosures in the CNMI are hard to find as government officials have acknowledged that none of them keep track of the issue. However, real estate agents and other observers are reporting that a gradual upswing in the rate of foreclosures has emerged in recent years that is distinct from the turmoil seen now in the housing market of the continental United States.

"We've got foreclosures going on right and left here but it has nothing to do with the U.S.," said Timothy Goodwin of Pacific Rim International, a local real estate company that deals with some foreclosed properties. "It's the economic troubles. There aren't as many jobs out there. People can't afford their mortgages and then even when they go looking to sell their homes, they find out that the market value is less than the mortgage itself."

Saipan's real estate market has long suffered amid the CNMI's economic woes with rental prices, for example, dropping significantly and some landlords even offering free rent in the first several months of a lease to attract new tenants. Most of the houses selling, Goodwin noted, are being sold for less than replacement costs.

And amid this decline, many homeowners are struggling to keep pace with mortgage payments, most of them on lowest rung of the economic ladder.

"The economy is in bad shape right now and a lot of the people seeing these foreclosures are on the fringes," said one foreclosure expert, who noted much of Saipan's real estate market, like the rest of the CNMI's economy, also depends on support from foreign investment, which has waned in recent years.

Goodwin's office now has several foreclosed properties under its control and he expects many more could be on the horizon should the market worsen.

"This has kind of been a gradual thing but there's definitely a lot more coming through," he said.

A problem for many local homeowners that is remotely tied to the housing market woes on America's mainland, Goodwin added, is the toll that the nation's foreclosure crisis has taken on banks that provide home loans. Some, he said, have become more conservative in their lending practices, meaning that homeowners often cannot obtain the loans they need to save their houses.

"And with property prices being so depressed, the banks will sometimes only loan you a percentage of the appraised value," said Goodwin. "So with appraisals coming in really low, people can't get as much money as they might necessarily need."

One controversial measure to revive the housing and real estate market, he added, might be to remove restrictions under Article 12 of the local Constitution that limit the right to own land in the CNMI only to people of Northern Marianas descent. Combined with an economic revival, Goodwin said this change—an issue that could come before local voters in the near future—may improve property values and improve conditions in the housing market.

However, an informed observer said the odds that the constitutional provision will be overturned are very low.

"It's not going away," he said. "It's too engrained in the popular psyche for folks here to lose it."

On the mainland, the number of home foreclosures rose 12 percent nationwide in August to record highs due to a jump in bank seizures, according to data from the investment firm Merrill Lynch.

Contestants sought for Ms. Marianas tilt

Stellar Marianas, the islands' non-profit pageant organization, is still recruiting for the 2008 Miss Marianas Universe Pageant, tentatively scheduled for Nov. 15, 2008.

Women aged 17-25 years old have the opportunity to represent the CNMI as its ambassador to the world and be a positive role model for the community.

The winner will be crowned the 2008 Miss Marianas Universe to compete in the 2009 Miss Universe in May and the 2009 Miss International Pageant in September next year.

Contestants will automatically receive free hair and make-up training, free nutrition and fitness training, free model portfolio, free media and public speaking training, a goodie bag from Stellar Marianas, opening number outfits, swimsuits and two months' worth of fun community events and activities.

"This is a great opportunity that you wouldn't want to miss. If you are interested, this is the time to join," said Stellar Marianas National Director Neda Camacho.

The titleholder could win $1,000 cash, $1,000 scholarship award, all expense-paid travel to the Miss Universe and Miss International pageants, and a list of other fabulous prizes.

Contestants have to be 17-25 years old, U.S. citizen, single (not married), have no children, and of good moral and ethical character.

"As a contestant, you will learn how to be confident on stage, meet different people, understand the virtues of competition, and earn the chance to represent your islands to the best of your ability," said Camacho.

If you are interested to join the Miss Marianas Universe Pageant, meet Stellar Marianas Committee members at Gold's Gym Saipan at 3pm every Saturday and Sunday.

For more information, call Camacho at 285-4663. ***(PR)***

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Head Start Policy Council
Agenda

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Head Start Policy Council hereby gives notice that it will have a meeting on October 8, 2008 (Wednesday) from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Napu Room, Pacific Islands Club, San Antonio, Saipan.

I. **Preliminary Matters**
  a. Roll Call
  b. Quorum
  c. Welcome & Introduction
  d. Adoption of Agenda
  e. Adoption of Minutes
    i. September 9, 2008
II. **Monthly Program Report**
  a. Managers
  b. Director
III. **Monthly Financial Status Report**
IV. **Updates**
  a. Capital Improvement Projects (2007-2008 Program Improvements)
  b. Human Resources
V. Standing Committees
  a. Personnel
  b. Education
  c. Executive
  d. Finance
  e. Public Relations
VI. **Old Business**
VII. **New Business**
VIII. **Executive Session**
IX. **Membership Changeover**
  a. Appreciation to Outgoing Members
  b. Welcome and Introduction of Incoming Members
X. **New Business**
  a. Election of Officers
    i. Chairperson
    ii. Vice Chairperson
    iii. Secretary
    iv. Treasurer
  b. Election of Standing Committee Members
    i. Personnel
    ii. Education
    iii. Executive
    iv. Finance
    v. Public Relations
XI. **Recommendations for Community Representatives to the HPC**
XII. **Schedule of Governance Training**
XIII. **Next Meeting**
XIV. **Adjournment**

Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session.

This meeting is open to the pubic, interested individuals are welcomed to attend. Any person(s) requiring special accommodations may contact Ms. Maria Muna at 664-3751.

Mr. Efrain Atalig
Chairperson

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust have scheduled a Board of Trustees Special Meeting on **Friday, October 3, 2008 beginning at 6:00 PM and Saturday, October 4, 2008 beginning at 9:00 AM on the 1st Floor of the Morgen Building, Suite #107, San Jose; Saipan, MP.**

The following agenda is hereby established:

I **PRELIMINARIES**
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda

II **NEW BUSINESS**
- Home Loan Program – Assessment of Individual Home Loans

III **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

V **MISCELLANEOUS**

VII **ADJOURNMENT**

* It is anticipated that the following matters will be discussed under Executive Session in its entirety.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body.

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Alvaro A. Santos
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Northern Mariana Islands RETIREMENT FUND

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold an ***Emergency*** meeting on **Wednesday, October 1, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.** at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Adoption of Agenda
II. REPORTS
  A. Report of the Investment Director
    1. Fund Investment / Market Crisis
III. LEGAL MATTERS
  A. Reports of the Legal Counsels
    1. Report of the Board Counsel
    2. Report of the In-house Counsel
IV. NEW BUSINESS
    1. Comptroller Position
V. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VI. MISCELLANEOUS
  A. Announcements
  B. Next Meeting
  C. Adjournment

/s/ JUAN T. GUERRERO
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Chamber membership meeting today

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will host its monthly membership meeting today, Oct. 1, at Pacific Islands Club, in Charlie's Cabaret. Simon Sanchez, the chairman of the Guam Consolidated Commission on Utilities, will speak at the meeting. This will be a great opportunity to learn about the serious troubles that faced the Guam utilities system not too long ago, how they have largely addressed those problems, and what the CNMI can learn from Guam's history in this regard. Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30am, and the meeting will begin at noon. Meeting fees are $15 for members, $20 for guests of members, and $25 for general public. ***(SCC)***

Palau Independence Day celebration

This is to inform all Palauans residing in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands that the Palauan Community Association-CNMI and all the 16 States will host the country's 14th Independence Day celebration (Oct. 1) on Oct. 4, Saturday, at the American Memorial Park Pavilion, from 7am to 6pm. All Palauans are invited to come and join and celebrate. There will be live band entertainment, games, and many other activities. For more information, contact the Palau Consulate at 235-6804. ***(PR)***

Royal Patron of Whales declaration

The public is invited to attend a presentation event to officially declare Her Royal Highness Princess Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu Tuita as the Royal Patron of Whales in the Kingdom of Tonga in honor of the Tongan Royal Family's commitment to protecting whales.

The event will take place on Friday, Oct. 3, at the Puatakenave Hotel, Vavau, Tonga. The official ceremony will take place between 5:30 and 6:40pm followed by refreshments and entertainment by the Housia Brothers.

The event is hosted by IFAW, the Tonga Visitors Bureau, Vavau Tourism Association and the Tonga Whale Watching Operators Association. It will be attended by Edgar Cocker, CEO Tonga Visitors Bureau; Erica Martin, director IFAW Asia Pacific; Lolesio Lui, president, Vavau Tourism Association; Allan Bowe, president, Tonga Whale Watching Operators Association. ***(PR)***

OPA hotline numbers

This is to inform the public that the Office of the Public Auditor's hotline telephone numbers for Rota and Tinian has been disconnected. Instead, call the Saipan hotline number, which is toll free for interisland calls.

Rota hotline number
532-0298 (disconnected)

Tinian hotline number
433-3937 (disconnected)

Please call Saipan hotline number 235-3934 ***(OPA)***

Live fire training on FDM

The Emergency Management Office, in conjunction with U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Guam, said the U.S. military would be conducting live fire training on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla from Sept. 30 to Oct. 3, from 9am to 6:30pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla Training Area on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, EMO is advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. ***(EMO)***

October at the Hyatt Regency Saipan

Celebrate "Oktoberfest" at Kili Cafe & Terrace

When you are in the mood for good times and great cuisine make sure to try a specially created menu featuring Bavarian delicacies and specials in a relaxed setting.

"Oktoberfest Specials" dinner buffet is available from October 13th till 17th.
6:00pm - 10:00pm
$35.00 per person*

*Club at the Hyatt cards welcome

"Festa della Zucca" at Giovanni's

To mark this season our talented chefs have created special menus and selections using the freshest ingredients.

"Festa della Zucca" menu selections are available from October 20th till November 7th
6:00pm - 10:00pm

*Club at the Hyatt cards welcome

"Autumn Specials" at Miyako

Indulge in a specially prepared menu by Chef Yu Fukada at Miyako and savour the flavorsome Japanese delicacies.

"Autumn Specials" menu selections are available from October 20th till November 17th
6:00pm - 10:00pm

*Club at the Hyatt cards welcome

Halloween Dinner Buffet in Kili Cafe and Terrace

A lavish dinner buffet at Kili Cafe & Terrace shall offer an assortment of culinary delights sure to provide an unforgettable dining experience.

Friday, October 31, 2007
6:00pm - 10:00pm
$35.00 per person

*Club at the Hyatt cards welcome

American Red Cross Club 200 at the Hyatt

Once again, American Red Cross puts its efforts for a worthwhile charity.
On October 25, 2008 the 20th Annual Club 200 will take place at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.
The theme of this year's event is "Halloween Ball" with opportunity to dress up for the costume contest and lots of raffle prizes to win.

Saturday, October 25, 2008
6:00pm - 10:00pm
For tickets and information please call 234-3459

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Labor sanctions three for lying

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Labor has sanctioned a company, its manager, and its employee for engaging in unlawful employment and lying under oath during a Labor hearing.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody ordered Power Corp. to pay a $1,000 fine to the CNMI Treasury and provide a repatriation airline ticket for its manager, Jeon Sook Ja Kim.

In his administrative order issued Friday, Cody revoked Kim's work and entry permit and ordered her to depart the CNMI no later than 30 days. He barred Kim for a period of one year from working in the CNMI as a foreign national worker.

The hearing officer also sanctioned the worker, Haiyan Nan, to pay a $500 fine, to be given in two installments.

Cody reinstated the earlier transfer provisions of the previous administrative order except that Nan was only given seven days to register with Labor's Division of Employment Services. Nan was also required to submit within 15 days an employer intent form to Labor's Employment Services.

"Although the parties expressed remorse at the April 24 hearing, that was only after they were caught and were attempting to convince Labor to be lenient in its punishment," Cody said.

The hearing officer said he finds that severe sanctions should be assessed against both the manager and corporation.

According to Labor records, Power Corp. operates a small business located within the Duty Free mall in Garapan. The company engraves pendants with personal messages and sells them to DFS customers.

Kim holds a foreign national work permit to work as manager of the business. Nan is a petitioner who had applied to work for Power Corp. as a "commercial cleaner."

On April 9, 2008, an objection hearing was held in the Labor Hearing Office regarding Power's attempt to employ Nan as a commercial cleaner.

Power manager Kim testified that she needed a commercial cleaner to help her prepare the pendants that she sells at DFS.

Kim testified under oath that the prospective employee, Nan, would be not be doing any actual engraving or selling pendants to customers.

Kim and Nan stated under oath that Nan had not yet started working for Power.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Cody affirmed the objection, finding that the employer's testimony "failed to establish the need for full-time employment of a commercial cleaner for this small business."

Nan was granted another opportunity to find a new employer.

On the evening of the April 9 hearing, Labor director Barry Hirshbein happened to be in the DFS store when he observed Nan working as a sales person at Power's engraving booth.

The Power's manager (not Jeon Kim) was called to the store, whereupon he admitted that Nan had been working at the booth for more than a month.

In response to the new information, the Labor director opened an agency case against Power Corp. and Nan for unlawful employment.

At the agency hearing on April 24, Nan admitted she had lied under oath during the April 9 hearing when she testified that she was not currently working for the company.

Nan then testified she had begun working at the employer's DFS booth on Feb. 10, and worked there continually until April 9, 2008.

Nan explained that she had been told by Kim that she was allowed to begin working for the company. The manager allegedly told her to lie in the April 9 hearing by denying that she was already working for the company.

At the agency hearing, Kim admitted that she had lied under oath during the prior hearing when she testified that Nan was not yet working.

In fact, she put Nan to work without a permit or authorization from Labor, even though she knew it was against the law to do so.

Kim also admitted she had advised Nan to lie at the April 9 hearing by stating that she was not yet working.

The manager expressed great remorse for her conduct and asked that all sanctions be leveled against her and the company, rather than the worker because Nan was just following her instructions.

Kim admitted that her intention had been to receive the commercial cleaner permit, then to switch Nan to a sales person position at a later date.

The Labor director sought substantial sanctions against respondents for the unlawful employment as well as for lying under oath at the April 9 hearing.

The director moved to revoke the permit of manager Kim; to revoke the prior grant of transfer to Nan; and to impose a substantial monetary fine against Power Corp.

In his order issued Friday, Cody said the parties' conduct in this case "is both egregious and willful."

"The unlawful employment of Nan amounts to serious violation, which alone could lead to denial of transfer relief and substantial sanctions," Cody said.

He noted that the fact that both respondents also lied under oath about the employment makes their conduct even more egregious.

Cody said, though, that having considered the matter carefully, he concludes that some leniency toward the worker is warranted in this case.

"Although Nan began working without authorization, it is understandable that she felt pressured by her new manager to begin working as soon as the manager instructed her to do so," Cody said.

Certainly, he said, Nan should be sanctioned for this unlawful conduct; however, the worker shall be sanctioned monetarily rather than by denying her transfer relief.

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/s/ **ELOY S. INOS**
Secretary of Finance

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

United States
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Council on Developmental Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Basic State Grant Program
Bldg. 1312 Capitol Hill _ P.O. BOX 502565, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-7000 _ Fax: (670) 664-7030

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the Council Members of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, through its Interim Chairman, is hereby giving a notice that a Special Meeting is to take place on Friday, October 3, 2008 at 9:00 AM in the conference room of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Welcoming Remarks
II. Roll Call
III. Establishment of Quorum
IV. Executive Session
V. Open Session
VI. Next Meeting
VII. Closure

In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 3 days in advance at 664-7000. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Derek Duenas, Interim Chairperson

Dr. Cabrera is re-elected to Humanities Council board

The NMI Council for the Humanities re-elected Dr. Debra T. Cabrera to a second term as a member of its board of directors during a meeting held earlier this week.

Cabrera

Cabrera, who holds a Ph.D. in sociology, is the dean of Academic Programs and Services at Northern Marianas College. She was elected to her first term in 2005 and has served as the board chair since April 2008.

Other new Council board members include Janet N. King, Charles P. Reyes Jr., and Lillian A. Tenorio, who were appointed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and Fredrick P. Deleon Guerrero, who was elected by the board. Each will serve a three-year term. King represents the island of Tinian.

The Humanities Council, a private, non-profit corporation established in 1991, is governed by a 13-member board, three of which are gubernatorial appointees.

Its mission is to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the humanities through support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and to the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

October 01, 1999

Teno wants INS to change agreement
There will be delay in the reimbursement to the CNMI of the costs incurred from hosting more than 600 illegal Chinese immigrants on Tinian after Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio asked to change some provisions of a memorandum of agreement allowing release of the federal money. Ferdinand Aranza, director of the U.S. Office of Insular Affairs, said some $950,000 have been set aside by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to pay the Commonwealth for expenditures during the Tinian operations.

Federalization of immigration laws won't deter influx of illegals
Noting the failure of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to protect the territorial integrity of Guam, Labor and Immigration Secretary Mark Zachares raised doubts on the capability of INS to shield the Northern Marianas from possible influx of illegal aliens if federal immigration laws were to apply here. "If the INA were to apply to the CNMI, it is inconceivable that the U.S. INS and other responsible agencies could protect the territorial integrity of the Northern Mariana Islands, a vast 14 island archipelago with over 500 times the territorial waters of Guam, from becoming a magnet for illegal immigration into the United States," said Zachares in a letter to U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski.

Teno asks Continental to showcase new fleet in CNMI
Following a big event on Guam that unveiled the newest fleet of Continental Micronesia aircraft, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday urged the air carrier to do the same in the CNMI to show its commitment in the region. Dozens of media from the Philippines, CNMI, Japan, Hawaii and other island nations in the Western Pacific were flown to Guam to take part in the event to welcome the first two of nine Boeing 737 jets the airlines have acquired to upgrade its fleet.

October 01, 2001

'Gov't revenues may drop to $193M'
Three years from now, unless a major new industry establishes itself in the Commonwealth or a major expansion happens in the tourism sector, the CNMI expects its General Fund revenue to plummet from $245 million to a heart-stopping $193 million. This was disclosed by Finance Secretary Lucy Nielsen, who said the CNMI may be in for some serious problems in the future, even as its economy remains in a stupor arising from the terrorist attacks in the US mainland.

CPA suspends hike in airport charges
The Commonwealth Ports Authority Board of Directors voted to extend the implementation of the Airline Incentive Program until 2002, in light of the looming aviation crisis brought on by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacked on the US. The extension automatically delays the implementation of the new and higher landing fees, which were originally scheduled to be enforced beginning today.

Reorganization in judiciary looms
A major restructuring looms at the CNMI judiciary, as Supreme Court Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan created six committees that will examine its operational efficiency in the light of the economic crisis that has been aggravated by terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. It was not clear yet if the judiciary will cut down its work force. The chief justice gave the committees until December 1 to submit their respective recommendations.

October 01, 2002

Food supplies run out .as typhoon hits Northern Islands
Although no casualties or injuries were reported, Typhoon Higos caused extensive crop damage in the northern islands of Agrigan and Alamagan over the weekend, leaving residents with severely limited food supplies.

INS memo: A visa doesn't guarantee entry to the US
Holders of valid U.S. visas face tighter screening upon entering the United States under a new Immigration and Naturalization Service order, which expands the categories of foreigners that have to register when applying for admissions at an American port of entry. Originally, only nationals from Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Libya and Syria were targeted for fingerprinting and special registration. The new order, issued by the INS Office of the Executive Associate Commissioner, now includes all aliens regardless of nationality.

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
SCHEDULE OF ELECTRIC CHARGES AND RATES
FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2008

CUSTOMER CLASSIFICATIONS	MONTHLY CUSTOMER CHARGES (FIXED)	RATES PER KILOWATT-HOUR (kWh) ELECTRIC NON-FUEL RATES (FIXED)	ELECTRIC FUEL RATES (FLUCTUATES)	TOTAL RATES PER kWh
RESIDENTIAL	$5.60			
1. First 500 kWh (1 To 500)		$0.016	$0.337	$0.353
2. Second 500 kWh (501 To 1,000)		0.066	0.337	0.403
3. Next 1,000 kWh (1,001 To 2,000)		0.086	0.337	0.423
4. All kWh After 2,000 (Over 2,000)		0.127	0.337	0.464
COMMERCIAL (All kWh Billed)	$7.67	$0.086	$0.337	$0.423
GOVERNMENT (All kWh Billed)	$7.67	$0.091	$0.337	$0.428
NON-CONFORMING LOAD (All kWh Billed)	$56.00	$0.222	$0.337	$0.559

HISTORY OF ELECTRIC FUEL RATES:

JANUARY 2007	$0.196	NOVEMBER 2007 (RES. ONLY, 11/2 - 30/07)	$0.258
FEBRUARY 2007	$0.188	NOVEMBER 2007 (ALL OTHERS)	$0.258
MARCH 2007	$0.188	DECEMBER 2007	$0.258
APRIL 2007	$0.191	JANUARY 2008	$0.258
MAY 2007	$0.222	FEBRUARY 2008	$0.253
JUNE 2007	$0.221	MARCH 2008 (RES. ONLY)	$0.176
JULY 2007	$0.223	MARCH 2008 (ALL OTHERS)	$0.288
AUGUST 2007	$0.223	APRIL 2008 (RES. ONLY)	$0.176
SEPTEMBER 2007	$0.228	APRIL 2008 (ALL OTHERS)	$0.327
OCTOBER 2007 (RES. ONLY, 10/1 - 3/07)	$0.228	MAY 2008 (RES. ONLY, 5/1 - 2/08)	$0.176
OCTOBER 2007 (RES. ONLY, 10/4 - 31/07)	$0.176	MAY 2008 (RES. ONLY, 5/3 - 31/08)	$0.357
OCTOBER 2007 (ALL OTHERS)	$0.228	MAY 2008 (ALL OTHERS)	$0.357
NOVEMBER 2007 (RES. ONLY, 11/1/07)	$0.176	JUNE 2008	$0.387
		JULY 2008	$0.413
		AUGUST 2008	$0.413
		SEPTEMBER 2008	$0.362

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Eleventh CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Thursday, October 2, 2008 at 3:30 p.m. at the BOE Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NMI Retirement Fund Bldg., Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda
- d. Adoption of Minutes
  - i. February 15, 2008 Minutes
  - ii. April 4, 2008 Minutes
  - iii. April 18, 2008 Minutes
  - iv. April 22, 2008 Minutes
  - v. May 23, 2008 Minutes
  - vi. May 28, 2008 Minutes
  - vii. June 12, 2008 Minutes
  - viii. July 11, 2008 Minutes
  - ix. July 25, 2008 Minutes
  - x. August 1, 2008 Minutes
  - xi. August 6, 2008 Minutes
  - xii. August 9, 2008 Minutes
  - xiii. August 28, 2008 Minutes
  - xiv. September 6, 2008 Minutes

II. Public Comments [1]

III. Reports
- a. Chair
- b. Board Committees
  - i. CIA
  - ii. CIP
  - iii. FPA & Special Education & Early Childhood
  - iv. LIA
  - v. School Reform
  - vi. Private Schools & Non-Public School Representative
- c. Commissioner of Education
  - i. Head Start 2007-2008 Program Information Report
  - ii. Financial Reports – Local & Federal
  - iii. Other Matters

IV. Old Business

V. New Business
- a. $20M Proposed PSS GO Bond
- b. Organizational Chart Amendment re: Auditors [financial Auditors & Federal Program Monitors]
- c. Retirement Unfunded Liability
- d. Head Start Teacher Requirement effective 2011
- e. ADI (Advanced Development Institute)
- f. CNMI PSS Book Publication
- g. PD Fund Allocation

VI. Executive Session [2]
- a. Legal Updates
- b. Personnel
- c. Other matters

VII. Miscellaneous Matters

VIII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting

IX. Adjournment

[1] Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

[2] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana
Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipåttamenton I Tano' Pupbliku

NOTISIA POT MAPROPOPONE NA ATKILONTANO PUBLIKO

Segun gi lai 15-2, I Depattamenton Tano ha anununsia planon atkilon tano publiko giya Saipan, Commonwealth i Sankattan siha na Islas. Todo man-interesao libre munahalom opinion `sino infotmasion pot imapropopone na plano nuson tano publiko. Maprebeniye lokue isigiente siha na infotmasion para benefision publiko tat komo:

i. I tineteka na tano publiko madeskribe komo 003 A 11 (49,450 metro kuatdrao), 003 A 20 (49,503 metro kuatdrao), yan 003 A 19 (10,000 metro kuatdrao) maso sino menos nigaige giya Magpi, Saipan. Kopian lugat este siha nasitiu gaige gi Depattamenton Tano ni libre maina nu I publiku.

ii. I para u inatkilai Flame Sako Resort yan Spa un kotporasion guine giya Marianas. I membron direktot siha isigiente: Kang Dae Sik, Joon Sung Jung yan Woon Hwa Chung.

I Presidenten I kompania si Kang Dae Sik; Chun Sik Min, Segundo Presidente.

iii. I para u atkila ilugat para u usa gimahatsan fasilidat hotel yan otro siha na fasilidat.

I tetminonestena kontrata para 25 años ya siña ma-ekstende talo 15 años.

I mapropopone na atkilon manegosio as Señot Young Woo Lee.

iv. Libre hao mamaisen kopianestena plano gi Depattamenton Tano ni gaige gi segundo bibienda gi Joeten Dandan, Saipan; offisinanTano Publiko giya Luta yan Tinian.

v. I Depattamenton Tano ta ya otro plano ha resibe gi uson este siha na propiadat publiko giya Magpi, Saipan.

vi. I Sekretarion Depattamenton Tano Publiko siña ha resibe todo ninahalom opinion yan materiat pot este na proposito uttimo gi Oktubre 3, 2008 todo Offisinan Tano Publiku giya Saipan, Tinian yan Luta.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) mellól Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóók-ka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong ischil mángámangiir, aweewe, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap. Me bwal Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngali milikka ebwe akkatéélló.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap ekke bwáári Lot No. 003 A 11, eyoor faigh me tiwow sangaras fabwu-ghuw limeigh me tiwow llapal (49,459 square meters), elap me ngáre eghús, Lot No. 003 A 19, faigh me tiwoow sangaras, lima bwughuw elluw (49,503) sq. meters llapal, elap me ngare eghuus, me Lot No. 003 A 20,, seigh sangaras (10,000) sq. meters, llapal, elap me eghus, elo Máschepi, Seipél. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor llól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngare óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Flame Sako Corporation. Schóól Assamwoolul mwiisch (board of directors) mellol corporation nge Dae Sik Kang me Chun Sik Min.

Samwoolul (President) corporation nge Dae Sik Kange. Vice President nge Chun Sik Min.

iii. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá bwuley ngali schagh akkayul hotel me akkaw iimw kka a fillong.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon ebwe ruweigh me limwoow ráágh (25 years), emmwel rebwe sóbweey ngáli bwal seigh me limwoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol akkilon ebwe mwir sángi llapal méél falúw (value of the property).

Schóól aweweel akkilon nge Young Woo Lee.

iv. Emmwel óubwe bwughil tilighial akkilon mellól bwulasiyool ammwelil falúweer toulap, elo aruwow-al pwó(2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Dandan, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Bank of Saipan Commercial Buiding, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

v. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo akkááw pomwol akkilon yeel me Máschepi, Seipél.

vi. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ebwe bwughil aweewe kkaal, aingiingil, mereer amweyút aramas mmwal schagh Ottuubre (October) 3, 2008 mellól Depattamentool Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta me Tchúlúyól..

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot Nos. 003 A 11, 003 A 19, 003 A 20 containing areas of approximately 49,500 square meters, 10,000 square meters, and 49,503 square meters (respectively), more or less, situated in Marpi, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Flame Sako Corporation, a CNMI corporation. The Board of Directors of the corporation are Dae Sik Kang, Joon Sung Jung, and Woon Hwa Chung.

The President corporation is Dae Sik Kang. The Vice President is Chun Sik Min.

iii. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and operating a resort hotel and spa and related facilities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Young Woo Lee.

iv. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; the 2nd floor of the Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

v. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Marpi, Saipan.

vi. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before October 3 , 2008 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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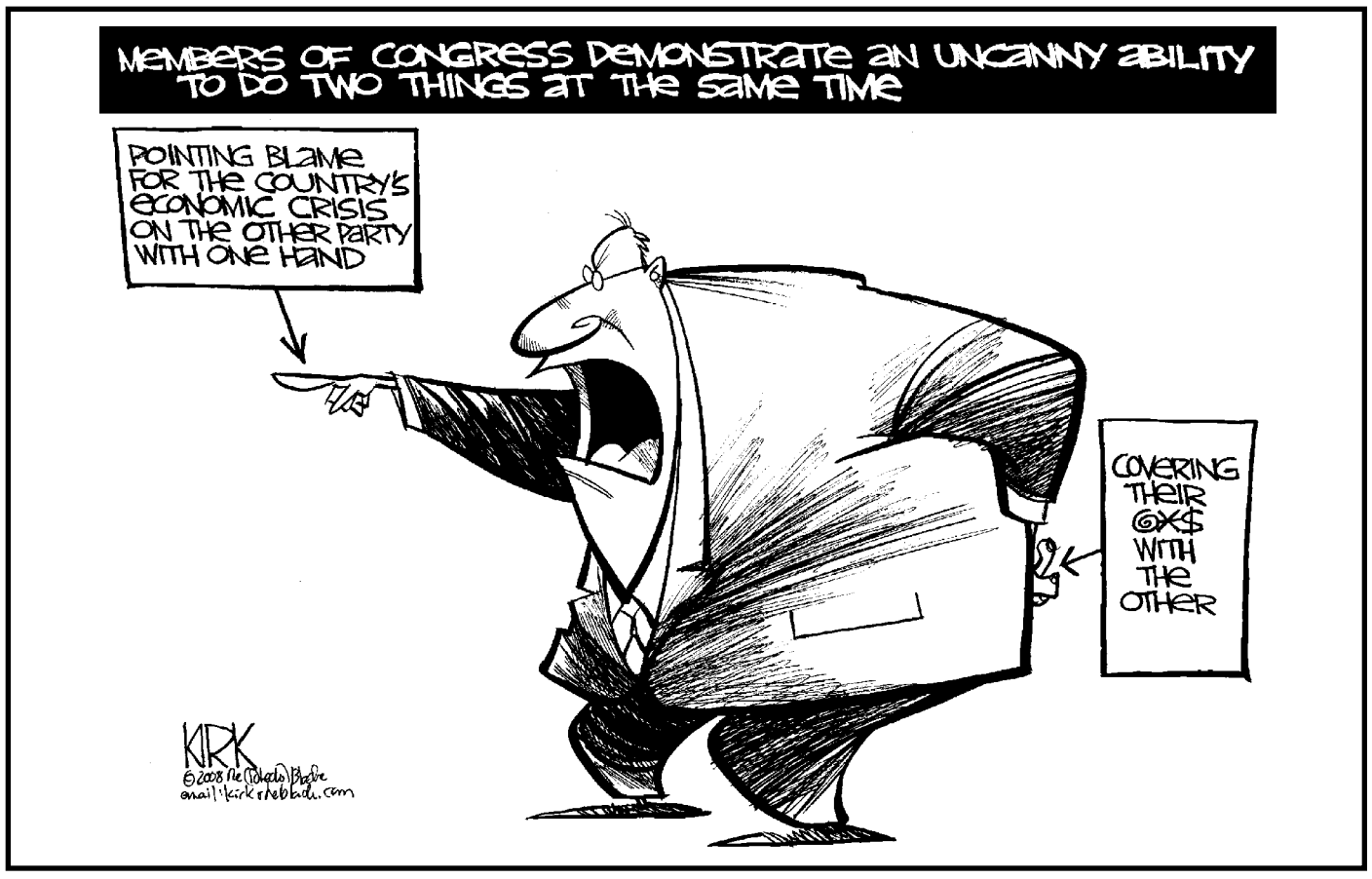
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS DEMONSTRATE AN UNCANNY ABILITY TO DO TWO THINGS AT THE SAME TIME
POINTING BLAME FOR THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC CRISIS ON THE OTHER PARTY WITH ONE HAND
COVERING THEIR @X$ WITH THE OTHER
KIRK
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THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

In defense of the Art of Wow

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

And now for something completely different…

There are those who believe mankind is inherently evil with occasional expressions of goodness. Others believe that man is essentially good with occasional lapses into evil. There are those who believe that the human condition is best likened to that of the downward spiral of a fallen angel. Others see it as the hopeful rising of an intelligent ape. And others believe that we are all somewhere in between. There are those who believe that each person has chosen a specific manifestation on this plane, and that the expression of good or evil on the planet is secondary to the underlying purpose of that manifestation. They believe that we choose our roles for the purpose of the experience alone, and that the question of man's goodness or evil is not the essential query. The essential query is, "What shall I experience in this lifetime?" "What experiences are consistent with the role I have chosen?"

In other words, there are those who believe that on a spiritual level, the beggar has chosen to be a beggar, and that he will therefore choose the experiences in this life which allow him to always manifest that reality. They say that the choice is already made. They say that despite the grandiose and optimistic teachings of texts like the Tao of Wow, that there are those who by virtue of this prior choice have chosen to live the outpicturing consistent with the role of say, victim. And that there is nothing that we or anyone can do to alter that choice in any fundamental way.

That presents us, then, with a unique question and a potentially unanswerable dilemma. That question is: *What real change do we effect in exposing others to the teachings of the Tao of Wow?*

Do we provide true guidance or merely confirmation to those who have already chosen their paths? If the belief we alluded to earlier is true, then Wow can be achieved only by those who have chosen "Wow Master" as their role. If true, then the *Tao of Wow* is not a map, therefore, of a path that any may choose to follow, but a chronicle of a path that only those who have already chosen it may take. It would merely be a mirror put up to the Wow Master so that he may recognize and manifest himself as that which he has already chosen to be. Therefore, we would have to conclude that no one but a Wow Master would recognize the path of Wow.

To him who has not chosen Wow Master as his role, the words of the Tao of Wow would be nothing more than an unknowable, unattainable, idealistic fairy tale which can be observed from without but never experienced from within.

This, then, is the eternal dilemma of all great teachings. Do they in fact encourage those who were on a different path to divert from that path? Is there real change that occurs as a result of the words on these pages? Or, is there merely recognition and confirmation by those who are already traveling the path. Do we change lives, or simply reflect them? Do we provide a road for others to follow, or simply outline a path that only those so inclined will and can make? Do we provide guidance or only confirmation?

That is the question.

The Tao of Wow assumes that given the choice to align the human condition with angels or apes, that we are more in league with angels. It assumes that this journey is not one up or down, but merely the earthly experience of a visiting spirit.

While there is evidence to support the contention that the "movement of man" mimics the theory of entropy, and that chaos is the underlying nature of the universe, there is ample evidence to the contrary—that there is order and growth and purposeful, positive development at play. Throughout mankind's history, it is the inexorable thrust for greatness that sets the Wow Masters apart enough for us to gaze at them in awe. It is the greatness achieved, rather than the depths of decadence descended into, which characterizes the movers and the shakers and those held in esteem by the masses of men. And those who represent man's baser instincts are just a smaller element of the populace who simply stand out all the more for their rarity. Perhaps it is the very fact of their rarity that they assume levels of prominence in the minds of many. In other words, in any quantification of the Wow Masters of history, there are more Martin Luther Kings, than there have been Hitlers.

It is this realization upon which The Tao of Wow hinges. Wow could not exist in a land of chaos and inherent evil. The Art of Wow, and for that matter, all WowMasters exist because of a reverence for something greater. The fundamental and consistent similarity among all Wow Masters is the belief in the Eternal Wow.

There is an underlying belief that there is something grander of which we are all minuscule manifestations and expressions. It is this humility that characterizes all who have attained the level of Wow Master on this plane.

SUMMARY OF THE ART OF WOW

In order to master the Art of Wow, you must first set your objective. You must identify the real enemy. You must understand that the battlefield exists only in the mind. You must be aware of and know how to negotiate the perceived obstacles of people and their actions, situations and conditions, and the passage of time.

To prepare to wage wow, you must be aware of societal expectations, your assets and the means of activating them, the challenges that confront you, the bar of present output, the Wow Master Ideal, and the method and pace of executing the steps to accomplishing your goal. You must be aware of the moods of the masses and how they affect your success. You must react correctly to the various situations you will encounter, and you must be willing to gain energy and inspiration from the Eternal Wow.

To wage wow, you must know how to use your thoughts, your words and your actions to elicit the response you desire.

The strategy for waging wow successfully is always to conquer the double agent of contrary mind first, to join forces with people of like mind, compete with none, remain above the fray, achieve victory through self-surrender, and to conquer the double agent once again. The Rules of Engagement will help you.

In attempting to wage wow, you may be ineffective if you misread the bar, misread people's mood, address the wrong target audience, address the right audience incorrectly, or doubt your own abilities. You must give your task your complete attention.

As you wage wow, the world may respond with indifference, envy, criticism, sabotage, imitation, competition, support or worship. Each requires a different response from you.

See IN DEFENSE on Page 13

EDITORIAL

Bailout court

Taxpayers angered by Washington's rush to rescue the financial industry can be thankful for the looming elections in November, which made lawmakers acutely sensitive to the costs and beneficiaries of the bailout. The root of the credit crisis, though, is much closer to Main Street than Wall Street: It's the worsening problems in home mortgages.

Foreclosure filings jumped again in August, as did the number of homes repossessed. The metastasizing defaults have dried up demand for the complex mortgage-related securities held by many financial firms. The bailout plan developed over the weekend could ease the crisis by putting a price tag on those assets, revealing which firms are healthy and thus restoring the trust that's crucial to the credit markets. Yet it also would saddle the Treasury Department (i.e., taxpayers) with assets that will lose value if foreclosures continue to mount.

Some advocacy groups and lawmakers want the government to help borrowers and taxpayers by calling a timeout on foreclosures. That's a bandage, not a fix. Eventually, home values will fall to a level that's sustainable without government help. As they do, though, Congress can ease the pain for some borrowers trapped in bad mortgages by allowing bankruptcy judges to modify their terms in ways that lenders either can't or won't.

In a slumping market, borrowers, lenders and investors in related securities all lose when homes are repossessed and resold. Lenders have a voluntary program to keep troubled borrowers in homes, but it has been handicapped by legal and financial issues. Bankruptcy judges, by contrast, would have more latitude to write off debt and lower interest rates for borrowers who could afford their homes at their current, reduced values. The change wouldn't spare the many defaulting borrowers who simply took on too much debt. Yet the mere prospect of a judge's intervention could prompt more aggressive efforts by lenders to write down balances and slow the pace of foreclosures.

Mortgage lenders oppose a change in bankruptcy law, arguing that it would sharply increase the cost of home loans even if the relief were limited (as it should be) to existing mortgages. Yet the experience with farm, commercial real estate and vacation home loans—all of which can be restructured by bankruptcy judges—suggests that the increase in costs would be much less than the mortgage industry predicts. More important, a reduction in foreclosures would trim the losses throughout the financial system, including the ones taxpayers would face from an epic Wall Street bailout.

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EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Difficult choices in difficult times

Notes from the Hill

By MARIA FRICA T. PANGELINAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maria Frica T. Pangelinan is a senator in the 16th Northern Marianas Legislature.

It's been some time since I've had a chance to sit down and focus my thoughts for this purpose. Analyzing the proposed budget for FY2009 and formulating possible alternatives has been a priority, punctuated often and sharply by the CUC crisis.

The poor condition, both financial and physical, of our utilities and infrastructure is extremely disappointing and dangerous. The possibility of a long-term catastrophic failure to provide power and water is still very real. Suffering through the consequences of intermittent and recurring blackouts gives you some insight into what a long-term islandwide outage could do. It is a serious threat to our social fabric and could bring severe health hazards. We cannot, under any circumstances, allow this to happen.

I defend the decision to bring Aggreko to the island. Aggreko is not a solution, only a short-term measure, allowing CUC to repair existing current engines and assess their future capabilities. The Aggreko contract has already and will likely continue to affect the budget resources in FY2009. The financial considerations are, and must be, subordinate to the ability to provide water and power.

I am a member of the PUIC Committee. We are conducting an oversight review of the CUC, past and present. Our findings will be used to assist in charting the future course of our utility services.

I know some have objected to the idea of even having a conversation with other public agencies about the resources they may have available to assist with the CUC crisis. Exploring every possible resource is part of due diligence, it is not a commitment to a particular course of action.

Getting back to the budget, during the period that the House has been analyzing the Governor's budget proposal, the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee has done its own research. This was conducted at a detailed level on each business unit. It also included discussions and meetings with the Executive Branch and members of the House.

We are making many difficult choices, and the needs of the Commonwealth are complex. I wish that the issues were simple, but they are not. Now, more than ever, it is vitally important to shift the budget process to working within our means while also planning for contingencies.

As a legislator my imperative is to focus on providing safety, health, and education to the people of the CNMI, for the lowest possible cost. This means focusing our financial resources in these directions, and streamlining other areas.

This has already started happening over the last few years. Each year of economic decline has produced a corresponding reduction in government resources and employment. In FY2005 the government had approximately $200 million in general fund revenues to work with. In FY2008 that number was down to about $163 million, and for FY2009 we are working with approximately $156 million.

In February 2008, when the available fund projection was lowered from $193 to $163 million, the budgets of health, safety, and education business units were reduced by 5 percent for the second half of FY2008. All other business units dealt with a reduction in excess of 15 percent. It was heartening to see the Legislature work together to minimize the financial impact to the fundamental services of health, safety, and education.

Right now, the Commonwealth's department, agencies, and corporations employ somewhere over four thousand people. I agree that this is still too much. The Fiscal Affairs Committee has formulated FY2009 budget options that focus on controlling payroll expenditures while preserving funds for services to the greatest extent possible and eliminating unfunded Full Time Equivalent positions.

General information about employment numbers and spending can create misunderstandings. This type of general information can come from the budget bill itself. Specifically, the FTEs approved in a fiscal year's budget are maximum numbers, rather than actual. Actual employment levels are often below that, if for no other reason than the dollars approved for the same business unit is not enough to sustain the maximum FTEs approved. Business units by law may not use operational appropriations to fund personnel expenses. This year, the difference between the maximum FTEs approved and the actual employment levels will be much less, as we are determined to have better tools to monitor personnel levels and preserve as much of the general fund for services as possible.

Changing the maximum FTE ceiling to closely mirror the actual employment level gives the Legislature a better basis by which we can monitor hiring.

In spite of the fact that hiring does occur, total employment levels have dropped a great deal over the last two years. In 2008, the notable exceptions have been in the Department of Corrections, which must honor mandates from a federal consent decree; and the schools, which must maintain certain levels of performance in order to remain accredited.

In the schools, I would like to see proportionally more money directly reach the classrooms, and the Fiscal Affairs Committee has made an effort to look for ways to accomplish this.

I do not defend all government hiring, but there has been some that is replacement hiring, and some based on a clear and critical necessity. While there is still plenty of room for streamlining employment levels, progress is being made.

I feel it is important that as you read this, that you understand that the Legislature is not immune to the cost cutting process. The Constitution allows an expense account for each member of up to $155,000. I want to clarify that this is not the amount that is or has been actually transmitted to each member's account for several years. We each have worked with much less than that and it will happen again in FY2009. From this account we pay our staff as well as purchasing office supplies, etc. Yes, it is also the account that funds contributions to non-profit organizations, volunteer programs, school activities, etc., which I do not support.

That being said, we have proven that we can manage with less, and I have hope that the lesson will carry forward, with frugality becoming an integral part of the process that funds these accounts. There is still a great deal of room for improvement in this area.

As a public servant I have a responsibility to participate in any austerity measures that may be implemented. I have done so, and have an understanding of some of the difficulties it brings to wage earners and their families.

The federalization of immigration will lower some staffing needs, and those changes are scheduled to start during the fiscal year we are currently considering.

We will soon elect a delegate to the federal Congress, and at that point, the costs of funding a Resident Representative to the United States will end.

Appropriation levels approved in a budget are maximums, just like the FTE maximums. Each time a mid-year budget reduction is implemented, the amount received by the business units is less than the maximum originally approved.

On a more long-range level, I've been advocating an organizational review of the government, a desk audit being part of that process. The Executive Branch is also exploring ways by which this can be accomplished. There are opportunities for eliminating duplications of effort, and streamlining operations that would be clearly identified by this type of review. The issue of impartiality points to the need for a third party from off-island to do the work. Part of the cost vs. benefit analysis before committing to such a process is determining how to enforce the results.

Our current budgeting process needs improvement. Existing policies and programs tend to be taken for granted, and the fundamental need to review priorities, program effectiveness, and service outcomes is often overlooked. The budget options formulated by the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee are a product of questioning the status quo and prioritizing funding for effectiveness and improvements to public services.

A business-as-usual approach to this and future budgets will not work. People are challenging fundamental government operations, questioning its efficiency and effectiveness, and expressing distrust of their representatives. It is a clear message that all areas and processes of the government, including the formulation of a budget, must shift to focusing on prioritizing performance and results.

The FY2009 budget options formulated by the Fiscal Affairs Committee propose to impose more responsibility on department heads so that they focus on program effectiveness and not just on the preservation of existing programs and funding levels.

We are beginning a transition from a predominantly publicly employed economy to an economy where the majority of residents are employed in the private sector. Over time, the changes in immigration, labor, and the minimum wage laws will facilitate the transition. It is necessary, as the government must move from supporting the people through providing employment back to its fundamental mandate of effectively providing the basic services of health, education and safety. This shift is and must be a process, not an event.

I supported assisting Mr. Pellegrino's non-profit trade school. He took it upon himself to make a personal commitment to the betterment of his community and made the school happen, rather than waiting for or relying upon the government. The venture is already showing results. This school will not serve the needs of every person who will be moving from public to private employment, but endeavors such as these are a transitional avenue for some.

There are others currently employed by the government who are qualified to immediately hold positions in the private sector. Those private sector jobs will not be open just because there are qualified candidates. Attrition will be the key to their availability. Then it is the responsibility of a candidate to actively seek a position, present themselves and their credentials in a professional manner, as well as prove themselves through performance on the job.

Even though the day-to-day functioning of the government continues to meet critical services, the Defined Benefit Plan is still underfunded. If we closed all government operations, shut down all public services today, and simply cut a check to the NMIRF for the entire FY2009 estimated General Fund revenues, there would still be an unfunded liability, so this is obviously not a viable option.

The recent drop in the value of the Retirement Fund's investment portfolio added millions of dollars to the unfunded liability. Even though these losses are from investment performance, the financial responsibility does not rest on the NMIRF but on the central government, meaning ultimately individual taxpayers like you and me. The solutions for fully funding the Defined Benefit Plan lie in continued long range planning and maintaining this obligation as a high priority. This is another one of the tasks I will be focusing on once a budget for FY2009 is in place.

These are only some of the issues that are affecting the short- and long-term future of our Commonwealth. This 16th Legislature is taking the responsibilities of their office very seriously. I have the honor and challenge of participating in finding solutions to these and other issues. Although the debate often runs lively and hot, I cannot fault the dedication and sincere effort being applied to the tasks in front of us.

I look forward to receiving the FY2009 budget proposal from the House of Representatives and working with them, my fellow senators, and the Governor to get a final version implemented swiftly.

Letter to the Editor

The Candidates Forum by KKA

The Kagman Komunidat Association wants to thank all the candidates who attended our forum this past Saturday. Your willingness to open yourselves up to the scrutiny of the public is to be commended. We also want to thank the public for attending in such large numbers, which helped make the forum a success. The Kagman Komunidat Association sponsored the forum to help voters make up their minds about who is the best candidate. The only two candidates who **did not** appear at the forum were Senator Luis Crisostomo and Felipe Atalig. Mr. Atalig was already committed to another engagement and there was no confirmation from Senator Crisostomo.

To those of you who missed the forum we hope you saw the full replay on MCV. The forum went very well and everyone enjoyed listening to the candidates. The forum was very informative and it helped many people who attended determine who would get their vote. The survey results showed that 87.3 percent of the people who attended were helped by the forum. We will release the exit poll results the day after the election to allow the public the opportunity to compare the poll with the real election numbers. KKA reiterates our appreciation to everyone (sponsors, volunteers, candidates and audience) for helping make the forum a success.

Jesse Torres, *President*
Martha Sablan, *Vice President*
Daniel Dae Young Huh, *Treasurer*
Retta Sue Hamilton, *Secretary*
Ambrose M. Bennett, *PIO*

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼78°	▲86° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°

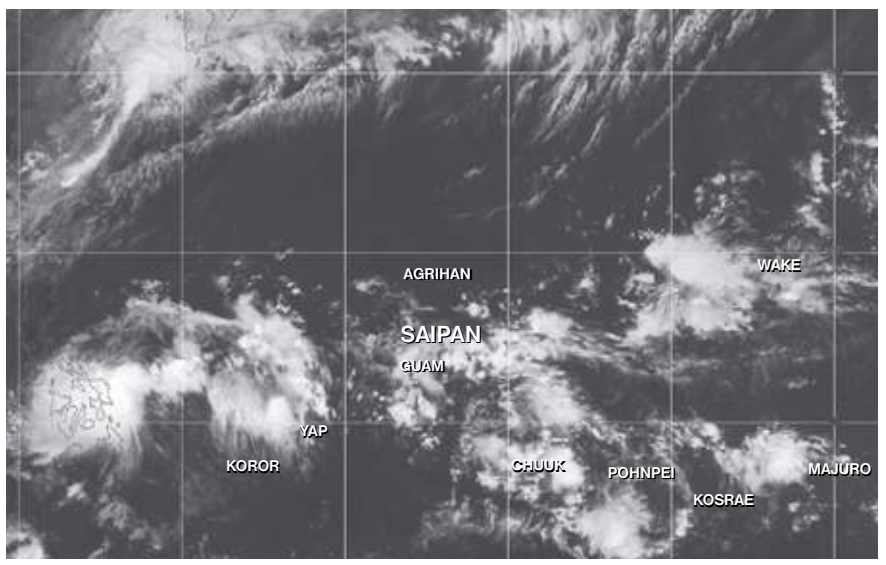
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼73
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼48
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼55
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲84	▼77
Honolulu	Showers	▲83	▼75
London	Showers	▲61	▼45
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲86	▼62
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲90	▼79
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲74	▼62
Miami	Thundershowers	▲88	▼73
New York	Thunderstorms	▲68	▼56
Osaka	Rain	▲77	▼60
Paris	Windy	▲62	▼45
Pusan	Cloudy	▲76	▼56
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲72	▼60
Salem	Sunny	▲78	▼54
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲72	▼57
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼48
Tokyo	Rain	▲66	▼59
Washington, DC	Thundershowers	▲73	▼53

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends southeastward from Tropical Storm Higos near 11N127E to 4N140E. Scattered showers associated with convergence into Higos are found north of Yap and Palau from 10N to 15N between 130E and 137E. An upper level trough extends from an upper low centered near 22N175E to an upper low near 20N160E to around 12N154E. Favorable upper level divergence southwest of the upper trough is enhancing showers and triggering some thunderstorm activity in the Marianas within an area bounded by 12N145E to 14N151E to 15N146E to 12N143E back to 12N145E. A diffuse surface trough extends from a low near Chuuk at 8N153E to another weak low south of Kwajalein near 8N167E. Convergent winds into the first circulation coupled with broad diffluent flow aloft is producing scattered showers within 150 miles of Chuuk. Convergence into the second circulation is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 120 miles of its center.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:45AM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
9:02AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:59PM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
8:20PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:07AM	6:06 PM
Thursday	6:07AM	6:06 PM
Friday	6:07AM	6:05 PM
Saturday	6:07AM	6:04 PM
Sunday	6:07AM	6:03 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:24AM	7:10PM
Thursday	8:16AM	7:51PM
Friday	9:08AM	8:35PM
Saturday	10:01AM	9:22PM
Sunday	10:54AM	10:11PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	3:15am	5:55am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:50pm	2:15am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

FCUK

FCUK is not the Federated Centers for Unified Knowledge at the Physics Department of the University of the Philippines, and definitely not the Fellowship of Christian Urdu Kaffirs of Uttar Pradesh. Nor is it a vocabulary test for my dyslexic SpEd students. The monosyllabic word is actually a very famous acronym for the boutique French Connection in the UK, with branches in the U.S., Canada, Australia and Japan.

I did a double take when I first saw a t-shirt at the Paseo de Marianas worn by a petite Japanese tourist daintily clad with a boldly, though perhaps, unwarily, risqué acronym-emblazoned attire. The seeming indifference the young lady exhibited over the funnily coincidental usage, Kimosabe, of the highly priced boutique item was refreshing in an island that still pretends that regulating the use of the f-word signifies refinement and good breeding.

Not too long ago, even our gaily irreverent sour grapes' imbiber in Garapan, in relating an incident when his exasperated 4-year-old son cussed CUC to high heaven for yet another power outage, he surprisingly conformed to the literary device of identifying "expletive deleted" to characterize his son's displeasure.

The continuing veiled appearances of a term used liberally every second on the second on the Southside of Chicago, and equally prominent on the lips of fellow educators and colleagues in the lunchroom and staff lounge, adds to its power. Lyrics to rap music that even 6th graders listen to are replete with repetitive adumbration of the term. One song titled, "I want to love you," popularly listened to by the preteeners a year ago, had a second version that replaced a word, and caused not an innumerable guffaws from the boys and giggles from the girls.

Last year, for having uttered variations of the term three times, I was hauled to the school administrator's office twice, resulting in a letter of reprimand permanently in my record for having been warned to stay clear of the verboten word and failing to comply.

It did not matter that the first time it occurred was when a student used the f-word on his classmates, and I repeated his words directly addressing it back to him, taking the pedagogical opportunity of asking whether he liked the term being directed at him at all. That did not endear me to the child, nor to a self-appointed sentinel of morality, a member of the teaching staff who relishes an oversight role to other teachers' behavior and pronouncements, albeit in a rather displaced marmish hypocritical way

Of course, prominent 20th century Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein had long ago reminded us that the meaning of a term is in its use, which by now should have demythologized the tyranny and power of forbidden words, though that paradigm shift has still to occur to the guardians of propriety. Our young has since taken to decorating their sports car windshields with elaborate calligraphic Swedish-looking words as a means to express their displeasures, and flaunt their disdain for archaic convent morality.

Vulgarity of words is, however, hardly our main concern here. Valuable as it is to defang the inordinate power of formerly perceived crudity, we might look at the reality of the concrete vulgarity, life-threatening offense, political impropriety and economic indecency that has suddenly visited the health of our pocketbook values. And I do not mean the practices that occur behind the privacy of bedrooms between and among consenting adults.

The frequency of the f-word today is heard, deeply felt, and profoundly meant in many places unaccustomed to the resonance of its utterance, from middle class living rooms to hardwood paneled corporate boardrooms, from the hallowed halls of Congress to the corridors of kindergarten hallways, from the din of the street corner diners to even the tight circle of our deep sea divers.

In the most arrogant display of snake oil salesmanship, American taxpayers are again being asked to foot the bill for an economic bailout of our collapsed banking and investment institutions unprecedented since the stock market crash of '29. We are being asked to hand Mr. GWB a blank check of almost a trillion dollars so that we can nationalize our corporate loses while still keeping in a few hands the concentrated wealth of the nation. We socialize the pain and privatize the gain.

This obscenity is worse than what is transpiring in emptying of the drawers of the Social Security System. Already, we are eating into our Commonwealth Retirement Funds even as we fail to remit to its accounts what it is due, but this is not even a drop in the bucket compared to the crow we have to eat over the failure of the global economic system that our Friedman boys from Chicago and the combined strength of the oil-coveting military-industrial complex have foisted over the economies of the world.

(Saying this will get me more than an administrative reprimand on my files. Already, anyone who as much as raise an eyebrow on our extended military incursion in Iran and ineffective strategies in decommissioning al-Qaida in our Afghanistan excursion, or mention the unheralded and hardly accountable 700-some military presence we fund around the world, can expect to be labeled unpatriotic, especially with the sudden ascendancy of GOP's gun-toting, flag waving Sarah Palin and her newly awakened retinue.)

I shudder when I hear McCain insist that the fundamentals of our economy are sound. In 1995, Nick Leeson, operating out of a cubicle in Singapore, bankrupted the century-old European Barings Bank by some ill-conceived, ill-timed, investments in derivatives. The American economy that rules the global economy trade in the currency of mirages and illusions. Since we took our footing off merchandise production in the '60s and dove into financial services and information technology as our economic toehold, watchful of quarterly bottom lines and awarding immediate commissions on those who can sell more unsecured securities and insured risks, we legitimized Ponsi crimes of persuasion with programmable cyclical collapses as a consequences of the schemes and scams. Those are the capital "Ds" that drove the Enrons and AIG to the ground but is the mainstay of contemporary economics and the fodder for the public and private cronyism, kleptocracies, and Abramoffs of our time.

For the man on the street, consider even the small "d" derivatives. Soda pop, carbonated sugar water manufactured at a cost of, at most, 3 cents, cost me a dollar at the vending machine. The $15 spent to make Nike shoes in Indonesia costs me $180 when it is on sale at FootLockers. There is real value and virtual value. We traffic on virtual values. Unfortunately, when our schemes go sour, our losses are not virtual.

I hope our presidential hopefuls will see that distinction in their debates. But given the fact that the funding of both is derived from the same source, I do not think either one will have anything substantial to say that might enlighten and alleviate the pain in my pocketbook. In any case, the vulgarity of our current situation abides, and I am royally pissed! Fcukingly!

Jaime Vergara
via e-mail

Luna, you didn't deserve this

About two years ago I woke up to a puppy crying loudly near our home. My first thought was that it must have been hit by a car. I looked out the window to discover a tiny puppy caught in a screen that someone had discarded. I freed her from the screen and painfully walked away from her knowing that I could not take on another dog as we already had our hands full with two adopted "Boonies". I was hoping mom dog would come along and lead her home. About 20 minutes later the dog was crying again. She was surrounded by 3 big dogs growling at her. We chased the dogs off. I walked away again even more reluctantly really hoping mom dog would show up. In a few minutes she was crying loudly and walking around in the road. Mom dog was not coming back. I knew that if I walked away from this dog again she would not survive. I brought her in the house and washed her. She was more flea infested than any other dog I had ever seen. I was horrified but knew it had to be done. My children helped me. After we washed and dried her we could see what she was. A beautiful puppy that strongly resembled a Golden Retriever. Darling.

We took her all around town so she would be safe from our other dogs and also hoping someone would adopt her. She was so sweet. My Principal was even kind enough to let me bring her to work until we could find her a good home. The students helped feed and care for her. Finally she scored the jackpot and was adopted by Glen and Lindsay who are true dog lovers. We had the privilege of watching her grow and thrive under their care. We listened to them talk about her health and personality as she grew. She was a regular at the soccer fields. She was so sweet. She cried when Lindsay and Glen would take to the field until someone would sit next to her. She would come put her head in your lap if you sat to watch the game. She trusted and loved people.

Last night Luna was murdered outside her home. Someone shot her in the back of the head with a 22 rifle. This morning I had to tell my three children. They are devastated. One of my children kept asking me how a human could do this to someone's pet. Anger tore through me as I told her, "I have no idea and it's not right." We will have to explain this to the school children. These are the same compassionate children who held bake sales weekly to spay and neuter ferrel cats who adopted our school. How do we explain this to them? What will they think? What will they learn from this experience? I'm so sorry Luna. You didn't deserve this. I still wouldn't walk away from you knowing everything. You were so lucky to have known love in a society that has some people that are so full of disregard for life. While this sort of treatment to animals is certainly not limited to the Northern Mariana Islands, we tolerate it by not passing laws to protect animals. Why?

In the Northern Mariana Islands there are no laws protecting your pets from being shot. We need to pass legislation now. We need a Luna Law. This has gone on long enough and I see absolutely no benefit to not passing a bill like that. What are we waiting for? I'm not even talking about humane treatment, which is long overdue as well. I am simply talking about safety for pets who we train to trust people.

Brenda Schultz

Monument will heal little, if anything

The proposed Pew monument of the three upper northern islands must have positive environmental attributes in order to be considered. One of the base ideas driving its and other monument areas' creation is the fact that the Earth and its creatures are under stress from human activity, and by eliminating various types of human activity the Earth may or will heal itself. This self-healing area will then act as a cushion, a bank, a band-aid; a sanctuary and a source of life both inside and out of its boundaries.

There is no doubt that on the near shore oceans and islands less visited and impacted by humans as compared to those more impacted and visited, the amount of animal, plant and other natural life is much greater. I have been to areas of little human activity: Helens reef and the southwest islands of Palau. Bikini and its nearby atolls. Midway Atoll and the northwest Hawaiian islands. The Darien jungle and the seas on the Columbian/Panamanian border. I've made more than a dozen trips as far north as Guguan.

There is no dispute that all of these places are incredible and the lack of human activity has allowed life to resist the decline in variety and numbers that is seen otherwise across the globe. Each is unique, but they also share features. One of the primary features they share is the difficulty of sustaining human life on any scale, and so they are considered remote. Distance from human centers of population, difficulty in transportation to the area, lack of food, shelter and comforts, plus lack of commercial, recreational, social, historical or commercial importance mean people won't go there. The few people that currently enter the proposed boundaries of the monument are scientists from the United States and other countries; occasional cruise and other ships transiting the area, and illegal fishing vessels from outside the U.S.

If I recall correctly, when the Japanese controlled the Marianas there was a thriving tuna fishery, but currently there is little to no U.S.-flagged fishing pressure on the proposed area. Illegal foreign fishing has and will continue in the Marianas until some sort of system is in place that allows officials to find, track, communicate with and expel offending vessels. Up until now it's mostly by actual ship and air patrols that these vessels are interacted with. The U.S. Coast Guard is the lead federal agency in interacting with foreign vessels entering into U.S. territory, and in this and virtually every other mission both the Guam CNMI offices hold high standards and I commend them.

The USCG's mission scope has many facets and stopping illegal poaching by foreign vessels in CNMI waters is one of them. However, the ability to do so even when confronted with direct evidence is severely limited by multiple constraints; the two greatest are the massive size of the area, the other is budget. There just isn't money to have patrol vessels steaming up, down and around the 200 miles on either side of the NMI looking for illegal fishing boats. While I lived on Saipan an Asian commercial fishing boat came into port because the captain had been speared while killing a marlin. The age of the wound and the speed of the vessel left not doubt the boat was poaching. The USCG made no action to investigate or sanction the captain or vessel even after I and others complained. There are still reports of foreign vessels poaching.

The creation of a monument will not alter the budget of the USCG, and it is clear that it is unlikely they will shift budget priorities in favor of more patrols. The creation of a monument will do little to actually change the amount of poaching or any other human activity around the islands north of Saipan: the upper three islands are already one of the least visited places on Earth. Making a monument will not change that. In those terms alone the monument will heal little, if anything. To make the greatest positive change in the CNMI's marine environment we need to look a bit closer to home, which I will do in my next letter.

William McCue
Wellington, FL

IN DEFENSE

From Page 10

Your eventual success will hinge upon choosing the correct response. These include ignoring, producing, observing, waiting, giving, focusing, completing, listening or simply walking way.

Finally, you must surrender your will to the Eternal Wow.

For more information on mastering the art of wow, visit www.artofwow.com.

***Note**: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!*

■■■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. *Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.*

Business

House rejects $700B bailout in stunning defeat

By JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a vote that shook the government, Wall Street and markets around the world, the House on Monday defeated a $700 billion emergency rescue for the nation's financial system, leaving both parties' lawmakers and the Bush administration scrambling to pick up the pieces. Dismayed investors sent the Dow Jones industrials plunging 777 points, the most ever for a single day.

"We need to put something back together that works," a grim-faced Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said after he and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke joined in an emergency strategy session at the White House. On Capitol Hill, Democratic leaders said the House would reconvene Thursday, leaving open the possibility that it could salvage a reworked version.

Senate leaders showed no inclination to try to bring the measure to a vote before they could determine its fate in the House. President Bush, meanwhile, was scheduled to make a statement on the rescue plan Tuesday morning, the White House said.

All sides agreed the effort to bolster beleaguered financial markets, potentially the biggest government intervention since the Great Depression, could not be abandoned.

But in a remarkable display on Monday, a majority of House members slapped aside the best version their leaders and the administration had been able to come up with, bucking presidential speeches, pleading visits from Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and urgent warnings that the economy could nosedive without the legislation.

In the face of thousands of phone calls and e-mails fiercely opposing the measure, many lawmakers were not willing to take the political risk of voting for it just five weeks before the elections.

The bill went down, 228-205.

The House Web site was overwhelmed as millions of people sought information about the measure through the day.

The legislation the administration promoted would have allowed the government to buy bad mortgages and other sour assets held by troubled banks and other financial institutions. Getting those debts off their books should bolster those companies' balance sheets, making them more inclined to lend and ease one of the biggest choke points in a national credit crisis. If the plan worked, the thinking went, it would help lift a major weight off the national economy, which is already sputtering.

Hoping to pick up enough GOP votes for the next try, Republicans floated several ideas. One would double the $100,000 ceiling on federal deposit insurance. Another would end rules that require companies to devalue assets on their books to reflect the price they could get in the market.

In the meantime, Paulson said he would work with other regulators "to use all the tools available to protect our financial system and our economy."

"Our tool kit is substantial but insufficient," he said, indicating the government intended to continue piecemeal fixes while pressing Congress for broader action.

Stocks started plummeting on Wall Street even before Monday's vote was over, as traders watched the rescue measure going down on television. Meanwhile, lawmakers were watching them back.

As a digital screen in the House chamber recorded a cascade of "no" votes against the bailout, Democratic Rep. Joe Crowley of New York shouted news of the falling Dow Jones industrials. "Six hundred points!" he yelled, jabbing his thumb downward.

The final stock carnage far surpassed the 684-point drop on the first trading day after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

AP

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., center, and House Majority Whip Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., left, leave after a news conference on the failed vote on the financial bailout package on Capitol Hill in Washington, Monday, Sept. 29, 2008.

Dissecting the Bailout

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 provides up to $700 billion to the Treasury secretary to help stabilize the economy by buying mortgages and other troubled assets from financial institutions. The goal is to jump-start lending to companies and individuals, thereby fostering economic activity.

The Heart of the Plan

The bill creates the Troubled Asset Relief Program, or TARP, which empowers the secretary to buy "toxic" assets from financial institutions with taxpayer money.

» Disburses the money in phases:

$250 billion *immediately*

$100 billion *if the president feels it's needed*

$350 billion *only after Congress has been given 15 days to object.*

» Gives the secretary authority to buy mortgage and mortgage-related securities, though other types of securities could be acquired if the secretary and Federal Reserve chairman deem this necessary.

» Allows the secretary to buy assets from any financial firm — including banks, savings and loans, credit unions, securities brokers and insurance companies — that are established or regulated in the United States. In some cases, foreign firms may also sell their assets to the government.

» Directs the secretary to purchase the troubled securities either through direct negotiation with individuals or firms or through a broader mechanism, such as a reverse auction.

Oversight and Transparency

Six independent oversight entities or processes:

» Establishes an oversight board appointed by bipartisan leaders of Congress.

» Creates an independent inspector general to monitor the Treasury secretary's decisions.

» Directs the Government Accountability Office to review and audit the program to ensure internal controls and prevent waste, fraud and abuse.

» Makes the Treasury secretary's actions subject to judicial review.

» Requires public disclosure of any bailout-related transaction by the Treasury secretary within two business days.

» Requires monthly reports to Congress and additional reports for every $50 billion in assets purchased.

Companies and Executives

Provisions to help the government recoup investments in troubled financial firms and to restrict executive compensation for companies receiving aid:

» Requires participating firms to grant the government an option to obtain nonvoting shares of company stock, so taxpayers can benefit if companies return to profitability.

» Establishes an insurance fund based on premiums paid by financial firms to guarantee troubled assets issued prior to March 14, 2008.

» Prohibits multimillion-dollar "golden parachutes" for executives who leave ailing firms.

» Recovers bonuses paid to executives based on promised gains that later turn out to be false or inaccurate.

Homeowners and Taxpayers

Measures designed to reduce the 2 million projected foreclosures in the next year and to protect taxpayers:

» Empowers government as the owner of mortgages and mortgage-backed securities to facilitate loan modifications (such as reducing the principal or interest rate) to help homeowners and financial firms struggling with debt.

» Expands eligibility and strengthens the Hope for Homeowners program's ability to prevent foreclosures. The program, which President Bush signed into law in July, offers people with high-interest-rate mortgages more favorable loans.

» Helps small businesses that need credit by aiding community banks hurt by the mortgage crisis by allowing these banks to deduct losses from investments in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac shares, which many banks owned.

» Gives taxpayers an ownership stake and profit-making opportunities with companies participating in the plan.

» Puts taxpayers first in line to recover assets if a participating company fails.

To download the full bill, go to **washingtonpost.com**

BY BRENNA MALONEY, ALAN I. SIPRESS AND DENNIS BRACK — THE WASHINGTON POST

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Dow plummets record 777 as financial rescue fails

NEW YORK (AP)—The failure of the bailout package in Congress literally dropped jaws on Wall Street and triggered a historic selloff - including a terrifying decline of nearly 500 points in mere minutes as the vote took place, the closest thing to panic the stock market has seen in years. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 777 points Monday, its biggest single-day fall ever, easily beating the 684 points it lost on the first day of trading after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. As uncertainty gripped investors, the credit markets, which provide the day-to-day lending that powers business in the United States, froze up even further.

Asian stocks plunge after rejection of bailout

TOKYO (AP)—The historic carnage on Wall Street reverberated across Asia Tuesday, with stock markets in the region plunging after U.S. lawmakers rejected a US$700 billion bank rescue plan aimed at stabilizing the U.S. financial system. All major Asian stock markets in the region tumbled across the board, succumbing to heightened fears of a broader global financial crisis. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index nose-dived more than 544 points, or 4.6 percent, to 11,199.07, with popular stocks like Sony Corp. down 6.8 percent and Toyota Motor Corp. down 4.6 percent. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng index sank 3.6 percent. Markets in Australia, South Korea and the Philippines were also down sharply.

Oil steady at $96 as traders weigh bailout flop

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices were steady near $96 a barrel Tuesday in Asia after plummeting overnight as investors weighed the fallout from U.S. lawmakers' rejection of a proposed $700 billion bank bailout aimed at stabilizing the teetering U.S. economy. After an overnight plunge, light, sweet crude for November delivery was up 33 cents to $96.68 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. Oil prices sank $10.52 to settle at $96.36 Monday amid worries that the financial crisis would drag on global growth and demand for oil. That was the second-largest drop in dollar terms and the biggest percentage-wise since 2001. In the last seven drays, crude has now fallen almost $25, or 20 percent.

Citigroup to buy Wachovia banking operations

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup agreed Monday to buy Wachovia's banking operations for $2.1 billion in a deal arranged by federal regulators, making the Charlotte, N.C.-based bank the latest casualty of the widening global financial crisis. The deal greatly expands Citigroup's retail franchise - giving it a total of more than 4,300 U.S. branches and $600 billion in deposits - and secures its place among the U.S. banking industry's Big Three, along with Bank of America Corp. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. But it comes at a cost: Citigroup Inc. said it will slash its quarterly dividend in half to 16 cents. It also will dilute existing shares by selling $10 billion in common stock to shore up its capital position.

Fed makes billions available to battle crisis

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Federal Reserve and foreign central banks moved Monday to pump billions of dollars to cash-strapped banks at home and abroad in a dramatic bid to break through a credit clog and spur lending. The Fed said the action is intended to "expand significantly" the cash available to financial institutions, its latest effort to relieve the worst credit crisis since the Great Depression. The goal is to boost the amount of quick cash available to banks and other financial institutions so that they'll feel more confident and inclined to lend not only to each other but also to people and businesses. The Fed action came hours before the House defeated a $700 billion financial bailout plan, ignoring urgent pleas by Bush and Bernanke to move swiftly.

Nation

Analysis: House vote against bailout wounds McCain

WASHINGTON (AP)—The house always wins, gamblers are warned, and the U.S. House made John McCain pay Monday for his politically risky, high-profile involvement in a financial rescue plan that came crashing down, mainly at the hands of his fellow Republicans.

The bill's defeat can hardly be blamed on the GOP presidential nominee, and it's possible that a revised measure might succeed. But by his own actions last week, McCain tied himself far more tightly to the failed bill than did his Democratic opponent, Barack Obama.

McCain argues that action is better than inaction in times of crises. His efforts, however, were aimed squarely at House Republicans, the group mainly responsible for the bill's demise, which triggered a record drop of nearly 800 points in the stock market, the most ever for a single day.

If Congress' impasse leads to a credit crisis, "it's not going to be good for McCain," said veteran Republican consultant John Feehery.

Another prominent Republican strategist, who would talk only on background to avoid antagonizing associates, said the vote was trouble for McCain.

As recently as Monday morning, only minutes before the House's stunning vote, McCain suggested that his call for a White House summit meeting Thursday, and his visit with unhappy House Republicans that preceded it, had helped clear the way for the bill's passage.

"I went to Washington last week to make sure that the taxpayers of Ohio and across this great country were not left footing the bill for mistakes made on Wall Street and in Washington," he told a crowd in Columbus, Ohio. "Some people have criticized my decision, but I will never, ever be a president who sits on the sidelines when this country faces a crisis."

On NBC's "Meet the Press" Sunday, top adviser Steve Schmidt said McCain managed "to help bring all of the parties to the table, including the House Republicans, whose votes were needed to pass this."

The comment suggested that McCain took responsibility for rounding up the needed GOP votes, "and that was probably a stupid thing for him to promise to do," said Democratic adviser Jennifer Palmieri.

AP

Republican presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., leaves after making a statement on the failure of the financial emergency bill to pass in the U.S. Senate in West Des Moines, Iowa, Monday, Sept. 29, 2008.

Palin: Pakistan remark was a response to a voter

WASHINGTON (AP)—Gov. Sarah Palin said Monday that her comment about attacking terrorist targets in Pakistan, which appeared to contradict the position of GOP presidential nominee John McCain, was a response to a "gotcha" question from a voter.

"This was a voter, a constituent, hollering out a question from across an area asking, 'What are you gonna do about Pakistan? You better have an answer to Pakistan.' I said we're gonna do what we have to do to protect the United States of America," Palin told the "CBS Evening News" in an interview about her exchange with a voter Saturday at a Philadelphia restaurant.

The Republican vice presidential candidate's answer was similar to Democratic nominee Barack Obama's statement that he would support sending U.S. troops into Pakistan to attack high-value targets like Osama bin Laden and other top al-Qaida leaders who are thought to be hiding in tribal areas along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

"If that's what we have to do stop the terrorists from coming any further in, absolutely, we should," Palin told the voter during the exchange, which was captured on video.

Except McCain chided Obama during Friday's presidential debate for saying publicly that he supports striking terrorist targets inside Pakistan if the Pakistani government is unable or unwilling to do so.

AP

This photo released by NASA shows the edge of a solar panel on NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander, right, in a trench on the surface of Mars, where a sample of soil was taken by the lander.

NASA lander finds minerals suggesting past Mars water

LOS ANGELES (AP)—NASA's Phoenix spacecraft has discovered evidence of past water at its Martian landing site and spotted falling snow for the first time, scientists reported Monday. Soil experiments revealed the presence of two minerals known to be formed in liquid water. Scientists identified the minerals as calcium carbonate, found in limestone and chalk, and sheet silicate.

But exactly how that happened remains a mystery.

"It's really kind of all up in the air," said William Boynton, a mission scientist at the University of Arizona at Tucson.

A laser aboard the Phoenix recently detected snow falling from clouds more than two miles above its home in the northern arctic plains. The snow disappeared before reaching the ground.

Phoenix landed in the Martian arctic plains in May on a three-month mission to study whether the environment could be friendly to microbial life. One of its biggest discoveries so far is confirming the presence of ice on the planet.

Scientists long suspected frozen water was buried in the northern plains based on measurements from an orbiting spacecraft. The lander also found that the soil was slightly alkaline and contained important nutrients and minerals.

Scientists think there could have been standing water at the site in the past or the ice could have melted and interacted with the minerals.

Ex-teacher in Nebraska gets six years in sex case

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—A former teacher who fled to Mexico with a 13-year-old student so she could have sex with him was sentenced Monday to six years in federal prison. Kelsey Peterson, 26, had pleaded guilty in July to a charge of transporting a minor across state lines to have sex and avoided a similar charge that would have carried a mandatory 10-year minimum sentence.

She will be credited for nearly one year she has already served and could get another year off for good behavior, said U.S. Attorney Joe Stecher.

The guilty plea doesn't mean Peterson is off the hook on state charges, which include kidnapping and first-degree sexual assault.

Her attorney, James Martin Davis, said he hoped those charges will be dropped, but Dawson County Attorney Elizabeth Waterman said she will proceed with a state case.

Peterson and her relatives and friends cried as they waved to each other across the courtroom and said, "I love you" after the hearing.

Peterson

She started having sex with the boy when he was 12 years old and a student at the middle school where she taught in the south-central Nebraska town of Lexington.

Peterson's attorney, James Martin Davis, had publicly questioned the boy's birth certificate. Davis said the boy was likely at least 16, and that he was the aggressor.

Amy Peck, attorney for the boy and his family, bristled at the suggestion.

"He was a 12-year-old boy and the defendant knew it," Peck said in July, after Peterson's guilty plea.

ACROSS THE NATION

Attorneys believe Rezko is talking to prosecutors

CHICAGO (AP)—Convicted political fixer Antoin "Tony" Rezko has been quietly visiting Chicago's federal courthouse, setting off speculation that he may be spilling secrets to prosecutors in return for a lenient sentence. Prosecutors investigating Gov. Rod Blagojevich's administration would plainly like to hear what Rezko knows, and there is plenty of incentive to talk. "Jail is horrible and Tony Rezko has just two options," says Jay Stewart, executive director of the Better Government Association. "One option is to do nothing and get a full sentence. The other is to cooperate with prosecutors." Attorneys with knowledge of the government's investigation of corruption in state government say they are convinced the one-time key fundraiser for Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich and Sen. Barack Obama is either talking or about to do so.

Murder charges filed in Washington state shooting spree

SEATTLE (AP)—Prosecutors filed six murder charges Monday against a 28-year-old man accused of a shooting rampage north of Seattle. Isaac Zamora faces six counts of aggravated first-degree murder, punishable by either death or life in prison without parole. Skagit County Prosecutor Richard Weyrich has 30 days to decide whether to seek the death penalty. A sheriff's deputy, two residents, two construction workers and a motorist were killed in the Sept. 2 shooting spree near Alger, about 70 miles north of Seattle. Most of the shootings took place in an isolated neighborhood; prosecutors allege Zamora then headed south on Interstate-5, firing as he went. Six counts of attempted first-degree murder were also filed, involving four people wounded by gunshots or stabbing and a couple who escaped injury when a bullet shattered two windows of their vehicle on I-5. In all, prosecutors filed 20 charges in Superior Court, including weapons and burglary counts.

Court: Great Lakes wolf returns to endangered list

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP)—A federal court Monday overturned the Bush administration's decision to remove gray wolves in the western Great Lakes region from the endangered species list. U.S. District Judge Paul Friedman in Washington sided with environmental groups that accused the government of misreading the law last year when it lifted protections for about 4,000 wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. It was the second setback in a week for the administration's campaign to return management authority to state officials in the two regions where the wolf has rebounded after being driven to the brink of extinction in the lower 48 states. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Sept. 23 asked a judge in Montana to return gray wolves in the Northern Rockies to the endangered list, reversing a proposal to drop them earlier this year. That followed the judge's order in July barring plans for public wolf hunts in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.

Asia

China marks Olympics and spacewalk for National Day

BEIJING (AP)—China kicked off its National Day celebrations Monday by highlighting its hosting of the Beijing Olympics and the country's first spacewalk, two hard-won successes in a tumultuous year marked by natural disasters, ethnic unrest and another food safety scandal.

The spacewalk on Saturday boosted a wave of Chinese pride and patriotism stemming from the Olympics, which is still a big news story in the domestic media one month after it ended. China's Olympic heroes were honored in a three-hour ceremony at the Great Hall of the People that was broadcast live on national television.

State broadcaster CCTV showed the three returning astronauts, with flower garlands around their necks, waving and smiling as they were treated to a homecoming parade in Beijing. Their mission, including China's first spacewalk, put the country closer to building a space station and landing a man on the moon.

Holding up Chinese flags and balloons, hundreds of people, many of them uniformed soldiers, cheered and applauded as the astronauts went by, with some shouting out, "Learn from the astronauts and salute the astronauts."

One banner read: "Warmly celebrate the great success of the task of the Shenzhou manned space flight."

AP

Chinese President Hu Jintao, bottom, and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao attend a banquet marking the 59th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on Monday, Sept. 29, 2008 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. China celebrates its National Day on October 1.

Cadbury pulls melamine-laced chocolate

HONG KONG (AP)—British candy maker Cadbury announced a recall Monday of chocolate made in its Beijing factory after it was found to contain melamine, the industrial chemical that has sickened tens of thousands of Chinese children.

The 11 recalled items were sold in parts of Asia and the Pacific, the company said in a statement. Cadbury's chocolates sold in the United States were not affected, said a spokesman for Hershey's, Cadbury's sole U.S. distributor.

Meanwhile, Kraft Foods, the maker of Oreo cookies, and Mars, the maker of M&Ms and Snickers candy, questioned the findings of Indonesian tests that identified melamine in samples of their products made in China.

Both Kraft Foods and Mars said they would comply with an Indonesian recall but planned to conduct their own tests and look into the possibility the tainted products were counterfeits.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Suicide attacks kill 1,188 in Pakistan since '07

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Suicide attacks have killed nearly 1,200 people in Pakistan since July 2007, most of them civilians, according to military statistics Monday that underscored the ferocity of the threat facing the U.S. ally in the war on extremist groups. Meanwhile, heavy fighting between Pakistani troops and insurgents in the lawless tribal regions of the country's northwest has caused some 20,000 Pakistanis to flee across the border into Afghanistan, the United Nations said. Nuclear-armed Pakistan has seen a surge in attacks by Islamic extremists since the July 2007 army attack on militants holed up in Islamabad's radical Red Mosque, during which about 100 people were killed. The most recent major suicide attack was the Sept. 20 truck bombing at the Marriott Hotel in the capital, which killed at least 54 people, including three Americans.

2 bombs kill at least 6 in western India

MALEGAON, India (AP)—Two bombs exploded in separate towns in western India in crowded markets packed with Muslim shoppers, killing six people and wounding 45 others, police said Tuesday. An 8-year-old girl was among five people killed and 30 injured late Monday in an explosion in a popular market in Malegaon town, nearly 180 miles northeast of Mumbai, India's financial hub, police said. Separately on Monday, a small bomb exploded at a market in Modasa town in Gujarat state packed with Muslims breaking their Ramadan fast killing one person and wounding 15, police said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Karzai seeks Saudi help in Taliban peace talks

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghan President Hamid Karzai says he has asked the king of Saudi Arabia to help facilitate peace talks with the Taliban to bring an end to the Afghan conflict. Karzai says there have not yet been any negotiations—only requests for help. But he says Afghan officials have traveled to both Saudi Arabia and to Pakistan in hopes of ending the conflict. Karzai says his government is trying to encourage militants to lay down arms and join the government. He underscored that he has reached out to Taliban leader Mullah Omar to "come back to your home soil and work for the happiness of the people." Karzai also said he would personally protect Omar from U.S. and NATO troops if he comes back to Afghanistan for talks.

World

Al-Maliki says security pact in US, Iraqi interest

BAGHDAD (AP)—Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said Monday that the government is ready to compromise to reach a security accord with the United States because Iraq still needs American troops despite the drop in violence.

In an interview with The Associated Press, al-Maliki said neither he nor Iraq's parliament will accept any pact that fails to serve the country's national interests. A poorly constructed plan would provoke so much discord in Iraq that it could threaten his government's survival, he said.

Al-Maliki said, however, that he is firmly committed to reaching an accord that would allow U.S. troops to remain in the country beyond next year.

"We regard negotiating and reaching such an agreement as a national endeavor, a national mission, a historic one. It is a very important agreement that involves the stability and the security of the country and the existence of foreign troops. It has a historic dimension," al-Maliki said.

The Iraqi prime minister spoke at length about the difficulty he faces in trying to negotiate the accord that would set the terms for the U.S. presence in Iraq for years to come. Supporters of anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr oppose the accord, arguing U.S. forces should leave Iraq as soon as possible. Neighboring Iran also has been speaking out vociferously against a long-term U.S. presence in Iraq.

"Pressures are coming from east and west and north and south, but we are determined to rise above all these difficulties and pressures because we want this agreement to be passed," al-Maliki said, "and we will go ahead despite all that is being said."

al-Maliki

The prime minister also noted with gratitude the high cost paid by American taxpayers, the U.S. military and the forces of other coalition members to secure Iraq's freedom over the past five years.

US Navy watches seized ship

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—U.S. helicopters on Monday buzzed a hijacked Ukrainian cargo ship carrying 33 Soviet-designed tanks and other weapons that officials fear could end up in the hands of al-Qaida-linked militants in Somalia if the pirates are allowed to escape.

Thursday's seizure of the MV Faina off Somalia, a failed state seen as a key battleground in the war on terrorism, could bring dangerous effects across the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

Piracy has become a lucrative criminal racket in impoverished Somalia, bringing in millions of dollars in ransom.

The pirates aboard the blue-and-white Ukrainian-operated freighter are demanding $20 million to release the ship, its 21 crew members, one of whom has died of an apparent heart attack, and its cargo of T-72 tanks, rifles and ammunition.

The ship, now anchored off Somalia's coast near the central town of Hobyo, apparently was destined for Sudan when armed pirates overtook it, likely from a speedboat, and climbed up the side of the ship.

"We maintain a vigilant watch over the ship and we will remain on station while negotiations between the pirates and the shipping company are going on," Lt. Nathan Christensen, a deputy spokesman for the U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet, told The Associated Press.

Although the pirates have not been allowed to take anything off the Faina, they have been allowed to resupply, one U.S. official said when asked if those aboard needed anything such as food. The official declined to comment on whether the negotiations between the pirates and the shipping company are being monitored.

U.S. Navy destroyers and cruisers have been deployed within 10 miles of the hijacked vessel and helicopters were circling overhead because of "great concern" over the possibility of the cargo falling "into the wrong hands," Christensen said. At one point on Sunday, the captain of the Faina said a warship was about two miles away.

"Our goal is to ensure the safety of the crew, to not allow off-loading of dangerous cargo and to make certain Faina can return to legitimate shipping," said Rear Adm. Kendall Card, commander of the task force monitoring the ship.

Although analysts say the pirates will likely be unable to unload the tanks, the other military hardware or a huge ransom could exacerbate the two-decade-old civil war in a country where nearly every building is pockmarked with bullet holes and all major civil institutions have crumbled.

The U.S. fears the armaments may end up with al-Qaida-linked Islamic insurgents who have been fighting the shaky, U.N.-backed Somali transitional government since late 2006, when they were driven out after six months in power. More than 9,000 people have been killed in the Iraq-style insurgency, most of them civilians.

Troops rush in to free tour group taken from Egypt

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Egyptian and Sudanese troops, backed by European commandos, swooped down in helicopters Monday to rescue a tour group that had been kidnapped in Egypt and taken on a 10-day dash across the Sahara to the frontier of Chad.

Freedom for the 11 European tourists and eight Egyptian guides came hours after Sudanese troops killed six of the abductors and captured two who revealed where the remaining gunmen were holding their captives.

The brother of one of the freed Egyptians said he was told that the kidnappers abandoned the captives in the desert and fled soon before the rescuers arrived.

Egyptian officials released no details of the rescue except to say troops used helicopters to bring out the prisoners.

"They took everything from us and left us with nothing," one freed Egyptian, Sherif Abdel-Monem, said of the kidnappers. Speaking in an Egyptian military video taken on a airplane flight to Cairo, he added: "But they treated us well. It was not harsh treatment."

The video, obtained by Associated Press Television News, showed the hostages inside the military plane, laughing and joking, drinking bottled water and being tended to by army doctors.

The five Germans, five Italians and a Romanian, along with eight Egyptian drivers and guides, arrived in Cairo on the military plane, smiling as they walked across the tarmac to be greeted with bouquets of flowers.

They were taken to a military hospital for checkups, but doctors said none had been hurt.

The ordeal began Sept. 19 during a safari on the Gilf al-Kebir, a desert plateau renowned for prehistoric cave art in a remote corner of southwestern Egypt, near the Libyan and Sudanese borders.

While the group was camping, heavily armed gunmen in SUVs seized them and took them across the unguarded border into Sudan.

The abduction—the first of its kind involving tourists in Egypt—was an embarrassment to the Egyptian government, which depends on tourism as the country's biggest foreign currency earner.

Campus Life

Grace Christian students show school spirit

Far left, Grace Christian Academy students and faculty members participate in a game during Thursday's Wacko Day celebration.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Left, GCA principal Faith Dela Rosa poses with members of Grace Christian Academy's student council.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

More than 300 students at Grace Christian Academy showcased their school spirit last week through games, banners, clothing and a pep rally.

"It really helps them feel like they belong. School is not just about studying," GCA Principal Faith Dela Rosa said of the weeklong events.

This year's activities took place earlier in the year in an effort to build camaraderie, she said, adding that it also sets the tone for the year. The theme this year was connecting the head, heart and hands.

"Some people think being in a Christian school is not fun, but God is fun also," she said.

Dela Rose said the school's Student Council planned the activities for the week. The Student Council officers are: Andrew Orsini, president; Monique Sablan, vice president; Keith Sablan, secretary; and James Sakamoto; treasurer.

Each day last week students dressed up to match the day's theme: Monday was color-coordinated day; Tuesday was twins or triplets day; Wednesday was professional dress day; Thursday was wacky dress day; and Friday was class t-shirt day.

Dela Rosa said the students have been preparing bulletin boards and banners in their classes, as well as developing a cheer to present at Friday's school pep rally.

"They've been preparing the cheer since the beginning of the school year," she said. "They've been working very hard."

GCA students cheer to show their team spirit. JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

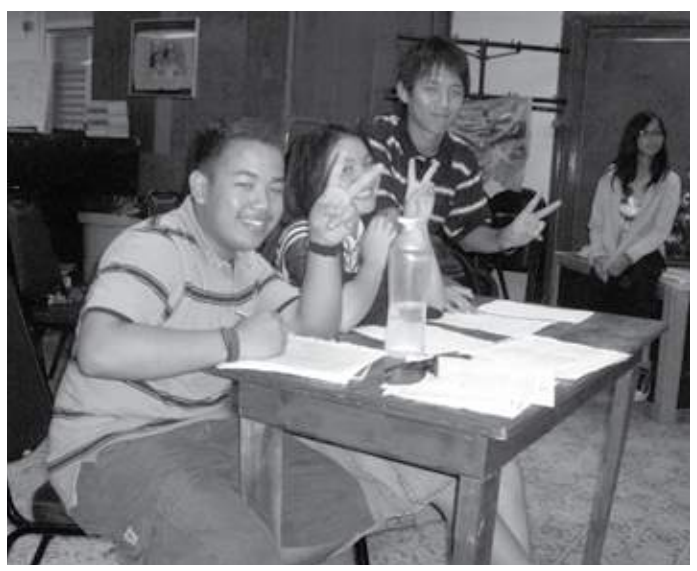
Thespians hold auditions for musical

Student directors from Marianas High School—Dennis Chen, Dowen Jocson, and Joseph Martin—conducted auditions on Friday, Saturday, and Monday for the 6th annual Thespian Chapter Play, which this year is *The Secret Garden*. More than 35 students showed up to read and sing their way into the production.

The Secret Garden is a musical based on the children's classic by Frances Hodgson Burnett, originally published in 1909. Its enduring quality stems from the charm and strength of the story. Although the story is now nearly 100 years old and takes place in England, students on Saipan responded enthusiastically when the Thespians of the Western Pacific Islands announced auditions for this chapter play. Students came from Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High School, Kagman High School, Hopwood Junior High School, ChaCha Oceanview Junior High School, Saipan Community School, and Saipan American Education Foundation School.

"I'm auditioning because I think this is a good opportunity to branch out. This can also help you learn how to speak in front of people," said Anna Zhu, 8th grader from Saipan Community School.

Although Harold Easton, MHS drama teacher, was on-hand as an adviser, the auditions were strictly a student operation. Parents who came with their children were ushered out of the audition studio.



Student directors Dennis Chen, Dowen Jocson, and Joseph Martin conducted auditions for the 6th annual Thespian Chapter Play, which this year is *The Secret Garden*.

"We let the students handle everything," Easton said. "Of course, I'm here to step in if needed."

It didn't seem that he was needed, though, except to end the auditions on the Saturday call when exuberant students wanted to read more and sing again, taking the stage in pairs.

The three student directors conducted the auditions, looking for specific qualities. Chen typically called the students forward. Jocson and Martin took notes and offered encouragement to those feeling a bit shy. The directors had the auditioners fill out a form, and then read a duet scene from the play. Each auditioning student had to sing a capella, and the directors occasionally asked for a second song to get a better appreciation of the auditioner's talents.

"The student directors were doing really well," said 9th grade SSHS student Anna Deleon Guerrero. "Some kids seemed nervous, but did well all the same. I wasn't nervous about auditioning. I'm nervous about what part I'm getting," she added.

In previous years, the Thespians have staged shows including *Up The Down Staircase, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Our Town*, and *Once Upon a Mattress*. The student directors of *The Secret Garden* hope to post a cast list early next week. And then the cast will get busy, because the production target date is mid-November. ***(PR)***

Q&A *with* GES *principal* Yvonne Reyes

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Question: How long have you been a principal?

Answer: Six years at Garapan Elementary. I've been in the system since 1993. I've been a teacher's aide, 3rd grade teacher, counselor, vice principal and principal.

Q: What is a typical day like for you?

A: A typical morning is trying to get through paperwork. With the support staff I have, it's pretty easy to be able to handle everything operationally. My life is pretty boring as a principal

Q: What is the best thing about being a principal?

A: I still feel like I'm a novice, and my heart is still in the classroom. In the classroom you get to know the kids and fall in love with them. As an administrator, I get to meet the families and get a picture of what the students' needs are because I'm able to get to know the people that live with them. The best thing is the staff. I've been very lucky. They work very well together. They are very serious and committed to the kids. When we need to, we pull together. I think you have to do that with a big school. We really are united.

Q: What's the hardest thing about being a principal?

A: Dealing with budget issues, trying to get our government to understand the investment of education. We're making strides. We're raising test scores and students are graduating and going to college, so we're doing something right. We need support from the local government. The support we need is not only financially, but it's a morale issue. It's a little bit embarrassing to know we're so well funded federally.

Reyes

There are computers, technology, Internet, but kids are sitting in dilapidated buildings with no air conditioners working and desks falling apart. There's no balance. I wish they had the same kind of pride we did.

Q: What are your goals for the year?

A: I really want to be able to build a playground for the kids and to get another kindergarten teacher. It's crucial to kids get in there [kindergarten] before going to first grade. Even if they can't read, they have at least picked up a book.

Life & Style

out of his comfort zone

In "Body of Lies," Leonardo DiCaprio's CIA agent character battles scores of terrorists.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

By CHRIS LEE
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Leonardo DiCaprio didn't realize he was in over his head until it was too late. "I was constantly fueled with adrenaline," DiCaprio remembers of filming his new espionage thriller, "Body of Lies." "There were certainly moments of sheer anxiety."

He wasn't talking about the physical hardships he endured for director Ridley Scott's homage to such '70s political potboilers as "The Parallax View" and "Three Days of the Condor"—although the 33-year-old Los Angeles native did endure plenty.

DiCaprio's character, undercover CIA operative Roger Ferris, is treated like a human pinata. He narrowly outruns terrorist bombs, gets torn up by shrapnel in a helicopter missile strike and attacked by a rabid dog while on a covert mission to take down a Middle Eastern terrorist cell. In addition, Ferris must navigate the treacherous shoals of his own government's convoluted agenda in the region, his progress undercut at every step by a ruthless agency station chief played by Russell Crowe.

Worse, in actuality, DiCaprio was stricken by a respiratory illness after filming a harrowing, emotionally exhausting torture sequence in an ancient Moroccan prison—the actor's latest movie war wound; he sustained a minor knee injury while filming 2006's "Blood Diamond" in Mozambique. "If you're going to put something like that on film, we all had an understanding that it had to be as realistic and frightening as it could possibly be," DiCaprio said of the torture scene, while seated across from Scott on a leafy patio atop the director's West Hollywood, Calif., production company complex.

Harsh appraisal

Based on Washington Post political columnist David Ignatius' novel of the same name, "Body of Lies" makes the harshest appraisal of American foreign policy of any big-budget studio film produced during the second Bush administration. The movie posits that our country has lost its direction in the Middle East, portraying frontline operatives as working without strategy or the necessary willingness to cooperate with foreign governments to achieve peace. "We're waging war in a place we don't entirely understand," said DiCaprio, who consulted with a former head of the CIA in preparation for the role.

But what really put the actor outside his comfort zone on "Body of Lies" was the unique professional mojo between Scott and Crowe—a hard-charging duo that takes a perverse pride in skipping any conventional rehearsal process and who would excise huge chunks of the script just moments before the cameras rolled. For DiCaprio, thrice Oscar-nominated and something of a muse to Martin Scorsese (after starring in the director's "Gangs of New York" and "The Departed" as well as the upcoming "Shutter Island"), it wasn't easy being the odd man out. And those kinds of challenges to his normal process triggered a fight-or-flight response.

"You hear it a lot in this business, that there's a 'shorthand' between an actor and a director," DiCaprio explained. "But Russell and Ridley were really accustomed to working together. It took me a few weeks to get used to that work process and into that pacing. It's just a few words then, 'Boom! Boom! Boom! Let's take that whole sequence out. You got it? All right. You agree? Great. We're going to shoot it in 10 minutes.' "

With characteristic movie-star magnanimity—a kind of default setting of celeb-speak that puts positive gloss on negative experiences, verging close, at times, to damnation by faint praise—he added: "I learned a lot from that."

Road-Tested Relationship

Scott and Crowe mark their fourth movie pairing with "Body of Lies," which reaches theaters Oct. 10. It's a road-tested relationship responsible for the best picture Oscar-winning "Gladiator" (2000) and the 2007 box-office smash "American Gangster" (as well as 2006's schmaltzy rom-com "A Good Year"). The director justified his methodology by pointing out that a table reading is usually enough to give the actors their "motivation." And that the shoot-now-ask-questions-later M.O. that he and Crowe have perfected allows interactions to be "a more visceral thing" in the director's view.

Producer Donald DeLine was on location for much of the movie's principal photography in Morocco and the Eastern Seaboard late last year. And although he stops short of saying DiCaprio was out of his element, he witnessed the actor's gradual adjustment to Scott's ways and means. "Leo's such a professional, such a prepared actor and takes it all so seriously," DeLine said. "But he got to know that Ridley's a wild man. He's got the ideas in his head; as an actor your job is to figure it out. He's a force of nature."

Run-and-Gun Technique

DiCaprio sounds more awed than bitter, more like an earnest drama student than a mollycoddled A-lister, recalling working on "Body of Lies"—in fact, his second movie with Crowe. The two shot the 1995 western "The Quick and the Dead" together in Arizona when DiCaprio was much younger and a pre-"L.A. Confidential" Crowe was still largely unknown outside Australia. "We only had a few scenes together but we hung out a lot in Tucson," DiCaprio said.

Confounding his standard operating procedure even further, DiCaprio wrapped production on the '50s-set romantic drama "Revolutionary Road" just weeks before shooting commenced on "Body of Lies." The film adaptation of Richard Yates' award-winning novel, which arrives in theaters this holiday season, reteams DiCaprio with his "Titanic" costar Kate Winslet as a suburban couple facing the disintegration of their marriage. But "Revolutionary Road's" Oscar-winning director Sam Mendes' immersive method of prep couldn't have resembled Scott's run-and-gun technique any less.

"I had just come from 'Revolutionary Road' which was kind of like a Broadway play," DiCaprio said. "It was endless talking about the relationship of these two characters. Rehearsals to the utmost. Carefully planning out each shot, each moment, each mood. It was a delicate process, which is important for that kind of movie. A month later, I was slammed into this big-game hunter's way of shooting."

Um, big-game hunter's way of shooting?

"We're sitting there in the middle of the desert. Choppers are flying above us. I've got to get my scene. The sun's going down, and a jeep is waiting for us to get in," DiCaprio said. "I'm like, 'Ridley! Let's just stop for one second. How the hell is this supposed to work?' And he's like, 'Let's not worry about it. If it doesn't work, we'll shoot it again.'

"His favorite thing to say is, 'Let's shoot it.' He's unlike any other filmmaker I've worked with in that regard. It seems like chaos, but he makes it look so easy."

Listening in, Scott seemed impatient with all the hullabaloo over his style but also proud. In his inimitably gruff way, the director set out to return the compliment.

"It's easy when you have people thinking on their feet," Scott said. "He's quick on his feet because he's been working since he was 9!"

"Thirteen," said DiCaprio, smirking.

"Well, you looked 9," Scott said with finality. "He's very experienced. This guy is comfortable at the dance."

Two numbers affecting each other on TV

NEW YORK (AP)—Dual scoreboards on live television flashed the U.S. House of Representatives' vote on a financial bailout and the Dow Jones industrial average. In the end, they both came up losers.

The nation's teetering economy played out in an extraordinary TV drama Monday. No one was certain about what would happen when those numbers finally stopped moving: at 228 to 205 against the bailout and a 777-point drop in the Dow.

"It was riveting," said Alexis Glick, anchor and vice president of business news for the Fox Business Network. "It was both a combination of fear and reality."

News networks showed a count of the House vote on a split screen with the Dow. It was one of those rare political instances where a vote is taken and leadership doesn't really know what's going to happen. As it became clear the bailout package was failing, the Dow plunged 400 points in front of your eyes.

"There was almost an audible gasp as this happened," said Melissa Francis of MSNBC.

The Internet age makes viewers used to the multiple streams of information, said CNN U.S. President Jon Klein. CNN correspondents were taking care to convey the importance of the situation without inciting fear, he said.

"This is not Armageddon," said Ali Velshi, CNN economic correspondent. "The world is not coming to an end."

But Klein didn't necessarily get to everybody. Glenn Beck declared to Wolf Blitzer that the financial crisis will lead us to the Great Depression.

Blitzer noted that economists are saying recession, not depression.

"I do!" Beck said, raising his hand.

For two hours after the vote had been concluded, the Dow continued fluctuating as political finger-pointing began. The average ended with its biggest closing point drop ever.

After plunging about 700 points, the Dow struggled to get back up to a 400-point loss again. The numbers went down again as the news networks aired news conferences of House Republican and Democratic leadership, before recovering once again.

"The downturn happened when the leadership spoke and the upturn happened when the leadership shut up," noted Fox News Channel's Shepard Smith.

He asked colleague Neil Cavuto whether the market was doing its job and spurring a recovery. Cavuto took a breath.

"I don't know, Shep, to be honest," Cavuto said.

The Dow soon went down sharply again.

AP

Traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange watch a television monitor as the vote on the bailout package is counted, Monday.

Ledger ex-lawyer, insurer spar over policy

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A former attorney for Heath Ledger is suing over a $10 million life insurance policy he claims has gone unpaid since the actor's death earlier this year.

Attorney John S. LaViolette sued Minnesota-based ReliaStar Life Insurance Co. in July, claiming the company is trying to avoid paying the claim to Ledger's 2-year-old daughter Matilda Rose.

The lawsuit doesn't mention Ledger or his daughter's name, but states that it is on behalf of a man who died of "accidental causes on January 22, 2008." That is the date the 28-year-old actor was found dead of an apparent accidental prescription drug overdose in New York City.

Ledger

ReliaStar states in its legal response that it is seeking more information about whether Ledger may have lied on paperwork and about whether his death may have been a suicide. LaViolette's lawsuit claims ReliaStar had to investigate any statements Ledger made in paperwork while the actor was still alive.

The lawsuit was removed from Los Angeles Superior Court to federal court in August. Its existence was first reported by celebrity gossip Web site TMZ.

"We have not rendered a decision on this claim," said Dana Ripley, a spokesman for ING Americas, which owns ReliaStar.

He said he could not comment on specifics about the lawsuit or Ledger's policy. "This is a very private and confidential matter," he said.

William Shernoff, the attorney representing LaViolette and Matilda Rose, said in a statement that ReliaStar has told him it will seek the depositions of a masseuse who found Ledger's body and of Mary-Kate Olsen, who received a flurry of phone calls after the body was found. The insurance company's attorneys also want to question Ledger's co-stars, agents and doctors, Shernoff said.

"There's a young girl whose father died who is entitled to this money, and ReliaStar is doing everything it can to avoid paying," Shernoff said in a press release.

He accused the insurer of trying to drag out the payment process, saying the lawsuit could take years to resolve.

Shernoff said Ledger's death has been thoroughly investigated and that ReliaStar's suggestion that it may have been suicide is improper.

"There's not a shred of evidence it was suicide," Shernoff said.

First debate seen by 52.4 million viewers

NEW YORK (AP)—The first debate between John McCain and Barack Obama, seen by an estimated 52.4 million viewers on Friday, was one of the first events of the presidential campaign that was not a huge TV hit.

The audience was 10 million less than the first debate between President Bush and Democratic challenger John Kerry in 2004, according to Nielsen Media Research on Monday.

It wasn't even one of the 10 most-watched presidential debates, falling well short of the record 80.6 million people who saw the only debate between President Carter and Ronald Reagan in 1980, Nielsen said.

Nielsen's count includes 11 networks that televised the debate: ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, MSNBC, CNBC, BBC America, Telemundo and Telefutura. Nielsen did not have estimates of the audience for the non-commercial PBS and C-SPAN.

Two factors may have held the audience down:

■ It wasn't clear until midday Friday that the debate was even taking place; McCain earlier in the week had called for it to be postponed because of the nation's financial crisis but changed his mind on Friday and agreed to participate.

■ Friday traditionally has fewer viewers than any other night but Saturday because more people are going out.

Still, the 52.4 million would make it the most popular television event since the Super Bowl.

The debate between vice presidential contenders Joe Biden and Sarah Palin is scheduled for Thursday, usually a big night for TV viewing. The most-watched vice presidential debate ever was in 1984, when 56.7 million people watched Vice President Bush take on Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman on a major party ticket.

US publisher of Muslim book closes office

NEW YORK (AP)—The U.S. publisher of a controversial novel about the prophet Muhammad closed its offices as a "precautionary action," but emphasized that no threats had been received and that "The Jewel of Medina" would be released as planned.

"We were out of the office for a meeting today, and we felt it was unfair for the employees to be back there without management," Eric Kampmann, president of Beaufort Books, said Monday. The publisher took on Sherry Jones' novel after it was dropped by Random House Inc. over security concerns.

In London, police said they arrested three men Saturday on suspicion of terror links, relating to a fire at the home and office of publisher Martin Rynja, whose Gibson Square announced earlier this month that it would issue "The Jewel of Medina," a fictionalized version of Muhammad and his child bride, Aisha.

Beaufort, the publisher that issued O.J. Simpson's reviled, once-rejected "If I Did It," plans to release "Jewel of Medina" on Oct. 15, with a first printing of 50,000.

AP

In this Aug. 21, 2008 file photo, author Sherry Jones explains why Random House Publishing canceled her book on the prophet Muhammad's first wife, "The Jewel of Medina," in Spokane Wash.

As of Monday afternoon, the book was No. 204 on Amazon.com. Barnes & Noble Inc. and Borders Group Inc. will both stock the book in stores, according to spokeswomen for the superstore chains.

Kampmann said he has discussed possible security arrangements with the FBI and New York City police, but added that nothing was planned and that there were no immediate worries about safety.

Random House was supposed to publish Jones' novel in August, but pulled it after determining that Muslims would be offended by its subject matter. The publisher acknowledged that it received no specific threats, saying in a statement that "credible and unrelated sources" had warned that the book "could incite acts of violence by a small, radical segment."

Britney Spears files appeals in driving case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears' attorney has asked a judge to delay the singer's upcoming trial on a misdemeanor charge for driving without a valid license.

Attorney J. Michael Flanagan filed a petition in Los Angeles Superior Court on Monday seeking a stay in the criminal case. Flanagan also wants an appellate judge to order the judge overseeing the case to grant Spears' motion to dismiss.

Flanagan has twice requested a dismissal of the case, saying that Spears should be allowed to pay a $10 fine and not face a criminal trial.

The 26-year-old singer is scheduled to go on trial in October on a single misdemeanor charge that she did not have a valid California license when she hit a parked car in August 2007 and left the scene.

Flanagan also argues in Monday's filings that Spears is unable to meaningfully participate in her defense because of her conservatorship. Since February, her father has controlled the singer's personal and financial affairs.

Also Monday, the pop star told a New York radio station that her clip "Piece of Me" leaves room for improvement - despite winning three MTV Video Music Awards earlier this month.

"It's a cool video, but I think by far I've done videos that are way better," the singer said in an interview with top 40 radio station Z100. "So I was really shocked that ... it got the award."

Spears called her triple victory "inspiring, though, because now going forward with the videos that I'm doing now, I can really go there and do something crazy and see what happens."

Spears, whose new album "Circus" drops Dec. 2, plans a possible world tour next year.

AP

In this Sept. 16, 2008 file photo, actor Shia LaBeouf poses on the press line at the premiere of the feature film "Eagle Eye" in Los Angeles.

Pair involved in LaBeouf crash charged

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Two people involved in an accident that injured Shia LaBeouf were charged Monday with giving police false information about the wreck.

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's office said Monday it filed one misdemeanor count apiece for Herbert Simon, 22, and Kimberly Bent, 21. A spokeswoman for Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley's office said Bent told police after the crash that she was driving, but that investigators suspect Simon was behind the wheel.

The charges stem from a July accident in West Hollywood that left LaBeouf's hand mangled, an injury that was written into script for the "Transformers" sequel that the actor was filming at the time.

LaBeouf was initially arrested on suspicion of drunken driving, but prosecutors announced Thursday that there was insufficient evidence to file a formal charge. Sheriff's officials say the actor exhibited signs of being impaired during the early morning accident, and could lose his license for not submitting to a breathalyzer exam.

Attorney Michael Norris said last week that LaBeouf, 22, was pleased to not be facing a criminal case and that he is confident the actor's license will not be suspended.

Investigators had previously determined that LaBeouf was not at fault for the wreck. Simon has already been issued a traffic citation for failing to stop at a red light in connection with the crash.

There is no arraignment date scheduled for Simon and Bent, and no further charges were expected. It could not be immediately determined Monday whether either of them had retained an attorney.

AP

In this Sept. 4, 2008 file photo, actor Ed Harris poses for a portrait at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto during the International Film Festival.

Harris plays jack-of-all-trades on 'Appaloosa'

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

TORONTO (AP)—Ed Harris took Old West self-sufficiency to heart with his latest film.

First, Harris secured the rights to Robert B. Parker's Western novel "Appaloosa" and pitched it to buddy Viggo Mortensen, who agreed to co-star with him in the saga of two upright pals aiming to clean up a lawless town.

Then Harris co-wrote the screenplay, produced and directed the film and put in 10-hour days to help edit it.

Harris even followed the singing-cowboy trail, co-writing and crooning a rootsy song for the end credits.

Appropriately, Harris was on a horseback-riding trip with his family in Ireland in 2005 when he read Parker's book. Harris said he had read some of Parker's "Spenser" mysteries and picked up "Appaloosa" because it "had a cool cover and looked like a neat book.

"Then I just started reading this thing and was totally delighted with the relationship between these two guys," Harris said in an interview at the Toronto International Film Festival, where "Appaloosa" premiered.

"I read the first couple scenes, literally, probably read 35 pages of the book or less and called my agent and said, 'Find out if this is available,' because it just tickled me."

The movie rights were open, and soon after, Harris passed the book on to Mortensen while they were promoting their film "A History of Violence" at the Toronto festival that same year. After Mortensen signed on, Harris got to work on the screenplay with his friend Robert Knott.

Harris stars as the close-lipped Virgil Cole, who arrives in Appaloosa as the new marshal along with longtime trail partner Everett Hitch (Mortensen). Bold, supremely capable and unshakably loyal, the two implement an iron-fisted rule over the town, taking on a gang led by a murderous rancher (Jeremy Irons).

Complicating matters is Virgil's romance with a widow (Renee Zellweger), a woman prone to indiscretion and indelicate behavior.

"Appaloosa," which has played two weekends in narrow release and expands to more theaters Friday, marks Harris' return to directing after his acclaimed filmmaking debut "Pollock," which earned him the third of his four acting Academy Award nominations and won the supporting actress Oscar for Marcia Gay Harden.

While "Pollock" was a labor of love shot on a tiny budget, "Appaloosa" was a much bigger production loaded with action and period design, a test of Harris' filmmaking chops.

"It makes you trust yourself. It makes you be much more decisive than I am normally in life, because you can't afford to hem and haw," Harris said. "You've got to make decisions, and also, it's great in terms of your relationships with people and delegating responsibility. ... on a normal day. I'm not that consumed. It's fun. I like it. I couldn't do it 365 days of the year, but basically, you dive in, you know some day you're going to be done with it, and you just go for it."

Harris began his career in theater and television before earning early big-screen acclaim as astronaut John Glenn in "The Right Stuff." He has mostly has built a film career in standout supporting gigs in such movies as "Apollo 13," "The Truman Show," "The Hours" and "Gone Baby Gone."

It was tough lining up the money for "Appaloosa," because Westerns generally have been out of favor in Hollywood in recent decades. Westerns do not sell well overseas, where financial backers hope to recoup much of their investment, Harris said.

He ultimately managed to raise a modest budget of about $20 million for the production, which was largely shot in New Mexico.

Harris had to fight to keep in sequences aboard an old steam train that are pivotal to the action, along with a shootout that was filmed in Texas.

"I said, 'If you start taking away these elements, the production value of this thing is not going to be what it's supposed to be. It's not going to have the visual impact it needs. It's part of the story,'" Harris said. "Anyway, we finally got it set up and going. It wasn't a luxurious shoot by any means, but we did have the means to do it."

Harris approaches filmmaking with workmanlike facility, his co-stars said.

"He's generally pretty efficient," Mortensen said. "He had to be because of the budget and wanting to put so much of it on the screen in terms of the production values."

"He's not a man of many words, you know. He shows up and says what he's hoping for, sets it up and puts it to film," Zellweger said. "Everything was just so comfortable and easy. Maybe that says more than any anecdote I might come up with. He's confident and he's pretty clear about he wants, and it just kind of falls into place."

Harris did some musicals in his college acting days and has played guitar and piano, the latter for his 2006 turn as the composer in "Copying Beethoven."

But the song he sings over the closing credits, "You'll Never Leave My Heart," came about as a bit of a fluke, Harris writing the lyrics and Jeff Beal, who did the movie's musical score, coming up with the tune.

"I was up late one night just fooling around, you know. I showed it to him, he goes, 'Let me try to write some music for it,'" Harris said. "Anyway, it was fun. We had a good time recording it."

Harris' song is an earthy, angry romantic reproach sounding like something a lonely cowboy could have concocted around a campfire back in Old West times.

Preceding it over the end credits is a modern country-rock tune from Tom Petty and his band Mudcrutch, "Scare Easy." Harris initially resisted the Petty song, finding the tone too contemporary for his 19th century tale.

"The first time I listened to it, I went, 'No, this is not right,'" Harris said. "But then I kept listening to it and we tried it over the credits, and it was like, 'Yeah, man, the film's over. ... Let's rock.'"

'Janet Jackson is hospitalized'

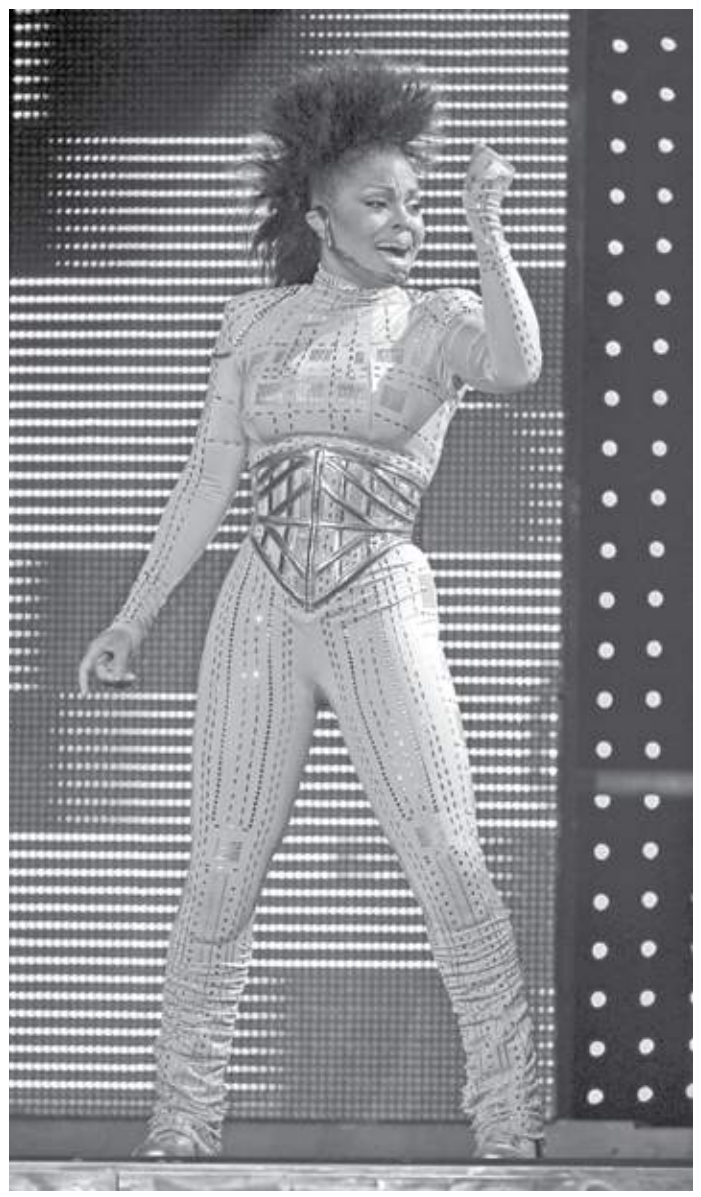
NEW YORK (AP)—A representative for Janet Jackson says the singer has been hospitalized after falling ill shortly before a concert.

According to statement released by W&W Public Relations, the singer canceled her concert in Montreal on Monday after she "got suddenly ill" during her sound check and had to be rushed to the hospital just before show time.

The statement says Jackson is being monitored at the hospital and hopes to reschedule the show. No further information was given about Jackson's condition.

A phone call placed to W&W after hours went unanswered, and a representative did not immediately return an e-mail seeking more information.

Jackson, 42, is on a North American tour.



AP

Janet Jackson performs at the Air Canada Center in Toronto during her Rock Witchu Tour on Sunday Sept. 28, 2008.

Rock drummer released from Ga. burn hospital

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)—Former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker has been released from a Georgia hospital after suffering severe burns in a fiery plane crash more than a week ago.

Hospital spokeswoman Beth Frits says Barker was released on Monday morning.

Barker and celebrity disc jockey DJ AM were the only survivors of the crash just before midnight Sept. 19 at the main airport in Columbia, S.C. Two pilots and two other passengers were killed.

DJ AM, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, was released from the hospital last week. Doctors have said they expect both men to fully recover.

Officials with the National Transportation Safety Board have said a cockpit voice recorder revealed that crew members thought a tire blew out and tried to abort the takeoff.

Jesse Ventura working on new series for truTV

This Friday, June 18, 2004 file picture shows former Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. with what he called "his new look."

AP

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Jesse Ventura will be working on a new conspiracy-theory series for truTV.

Production of a pilot featuring Ventura begins next month. The project comes from A. Smith & Co. Productions, which also produces "Hell's Kitchen" and "Trading Spaces."

Ventura will travel the country, investigating cases and getting input from believers and skeptics before passing judgment on a theory's validity.

"Ventura will hunt down answers, plunging viewers into a world of secret meetings, midnight surveillance, shifty characters and dark forces," truTV said in a statement.

Ventura, a former pro wrestler and Minnesota governor, hosted a weekly talk show that lasted two months on MSNBC in 2003. He was also a TV commentator for the XFL, an alternative football league that folded after airing for one season on NBC in 2000. Elected governor in 1998, he did not run for reelection in 2002.

McCready to serve 60 days for probation violation

FRANKLIN, Tenn. (AP)—Country singer Mindy McCready will surrender to authorities Tuesday to begin serving a 60-day sentence for violating her probation on a 2004 drug charge.

McCready's deal with Williamson County prosecutors was announced Monday by her attorney, Lee Ofman.

The 32-year-old singer was accused in June of falsifying her community service records and charged with violating her probation. "I am working very hard to put all of this behind me as quickly as possible so I can get back to what I love to do most: sing, write songs and entertain," McCready said in a statement. "I would like to thank my fans for their unwavering support as I continue to work on my recovery and to regain custody of my precious son, Zander."

McCready received a suspended three-year sentence in 2004 for fraudulently obtaining prescription painkillers.

In July 2007, she was accused of scuffling with her mother and resisting arrest at her mother's home in Fort Myers, Fla. She was sentenced to prison for the probation violation and released last December.

McCready had a No. 1 single in 1996 with "Guys Do It All the Time," but was dropped from her record label after lackluster sales. She has been dogged by legal and personal problems in recent years.

AP

In this Aug. 22, 2006 file photo, Country singer Mindy McCready answers questions outside the courtroom in Franklin, Tenn.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Merv Griffin's company sues Ed McMahon

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Court documents show a company founded by Merv Griffin is suing Ed McMahon for a $100,000 loan it claims has gone unpaid. The Griffin Group Inc. claims it loaned the money to McMahon, Johnny Carson's sidekick on the "Tonight" show, in 2005. The company filed the suit on Thursday and states that none of the loan has been repaid. McMahon's publicist didn't directly address the lawsuit, instead asking, "Anybody wanna buy a nice house in The Summit?" The quote is an allusion to McMahon's hilltop home, which is facing foreclosure. The former pitchman also faces numerous other lawsuits filed on behalf of creditors. Griffin, the longtime talk-show host who created "Jeopardy" and "Wheel of Fortune," died in 2007. The lawsuit is seeking repayment of the money, with interest and attorney fees.

'All My Sons' generated potent grosses last week

NEW YORK (AP)—Is Katie Holmes helping "All My Sons" pull in potent grosses on Broadway? Last week, the Arthur Miller drama was the highest-grossing play on Broadway, with $684,002 for its first full week of eight preview performances at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre. It played to nearly 98 percent capacity at the 1,052-seat theater. The revival - starring John Lithgow, Dianne Wiest, Patrick Wilson and Holmes - opens officially on Oct. 16. It has a top ticket price of $116.50 with premium tickets topping out at $300 for certain performances. Hit musicals, of course, usually gross much more. "Wicked," for example, took in more than $1.3 million last week at the 1,809-seat Gershwin Theatre.

Couple splits cost of living, but not cost of birth control

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been living together for a year. We split all the bills—rent, utilities, etc.—in half.

A few nights ago I asked him how he felt about paying for half my birth control pills, which amounts to $40 a month. Because neither of us is ready for children, I think we should share the expense.

Am I out of line to ask my boyfriend to split the cost with me? This has become a hot topic at work. The guys don't agree with me, and surprisingly, most of the women don't, either. What is your take on this?

ALL IN LOVE IS FAIR

DEAR ALL: As I see it, there are two kinds of expenses when people share a dwelling: joint expenses and those that are personal. Prescription drugs usually fall into the latter category. Unless you are prepared to pay half the cost of his prescription drugs—including Viagra—my advice is to back down on this one.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Ever since my best friend, "Wendy," turned 40, she has gone bonkers. Don't get me wrong, some of the craziness is good. We're both starting to lose weight. Wendy also went back to school and seemed to be happy with husband No. 3.

What has me concerned is that Wendy appears to have developed an eating disorder because she's so determined to be the same size as her 21-year-old daughter. She has also become obsessed with an 18-year-old boy, which could end her marriage.

I love Wendy, but when I try to talk to her, she calls me "judgmental" and "holier than thou." Is there anything I can do to help my friend?

MIDLIFE CRISIS

DEAR M.C.: You may love Wendy, but unless the woman is willing to face up to the fact that she has a problem, there is nothing anyone can do to "help" her. She may be terrified of growing old, not as happy as you thought with husband No. 3, or competing with her daughter. Be supportive, and recommend that she make an appointment with her doctor or a psychologist when the time comes. But until she's ready to listen, she will continue to tune you out.

P.S. I don't know what happened to her first two marriages, but it appears Wendy may be someone who is unable to learn from past mistakes.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My 22-year-old daughter was driving on a busy street when she noticed an older gentleman in running shorts lying on the median. She stopped, turned on her hazard lights and went to help. He was unresponsive, but breathing.

When she called 911, she was told that more than 100 motorists had reported a "dead man" on the street, but no one had stopped to check on him. Police, an ambulance and a fire truck arrived shortly after her call.

Abby, at what point do we become invisible? When do we cease to be important? Would it have been different if that person had been a child or someone in his 30s? Have we lost our humanity?

DISAPPOINTED IN TAMPA

DEAR DISAPPOINTED: I doubt whether the situation would have been different if the man had been in his 30s rather than a senior. If a child had been lying there ... maybe.

The passing motorists may have thought they had "done their duty" by calling 911 and were afraid to do more because they didn't know what else to do. Have we lost our humanity? Some people may have, but your daughter isn't one of them. Orchids to her, and to you, for having raised such a caring—and proactive—individual.

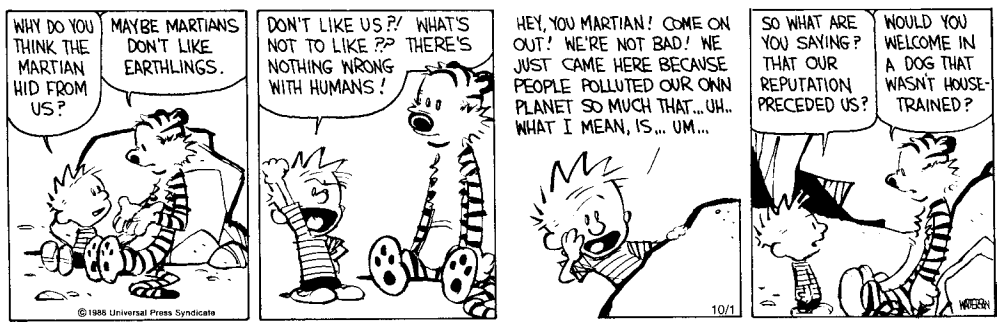
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHY DO YOU THINK THE MARTIAN HID FROM US?
MAYBE MARTIANS DON'T LIKE EARTHLINGS.
© 1988 Universal Press Syndicate
DON'T LIKE US?! WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE?? THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HUMANS!
HEY, YOU MARTIAN! COME ON OUT! WE'RE NOT BAD! WE JUST CAME HERE BECAUSE PEOPLE POLLUTED OUR OWN PLANET SO MUCH THAT... UH.. WHAT I MEAN, IS... UM...
10/1
SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? THAT OUR REPUTATION PRECEDED US?
WOULD YOU WELCOME IN A DOG THAT WASN'T HOUSE-TRAINED?
WATTERSON

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

DO YOU REMEMBER MY OLD GIRLFRIEND LORETTA?
NO
www.garfield.com
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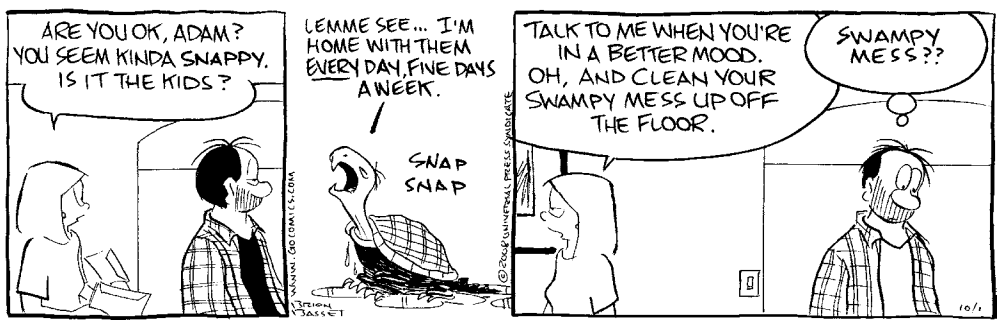
THE ONE WITH THE HUGE BUCKTEETH?
YOU KNOW I'M TERRIBLE WITH NAMES
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate
SHE COULD OPEN A CAN WITH HER OVERBITE
OH, YEAH... UTENSIL FACE!
JIM DAVIS 10-1

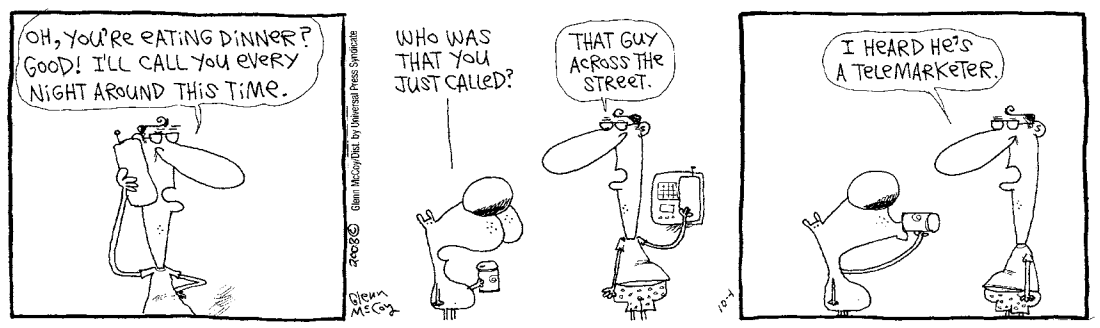
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


ARE YOU OK, ADAM? YOU SEEM KINDA SNAPPY. IS IT THE KIDS?
LEMME SEE... I'M HOME WITH THEM EVERY DAY, FIVE DAYS A WEEK.
SNAP SNAP
TALK TO ME WHEN YOU'RE IN A BETTER MOOD. OH, AND CLEAN YOUR SWAMPY MESS UP OFF THE FLOOR.
SWAMPY MESS??
10/1

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


OH, YOU'RE EATING DINNER? GOOD! I'LL CALL YOU EVERY NIGHT AROUND THIS TIME.
Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
WHO WAS THAT YOU JUST CALLED?
THAT GUY ACROSS THE STREET.
I HEARD HE'S A TELEMARKETER.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

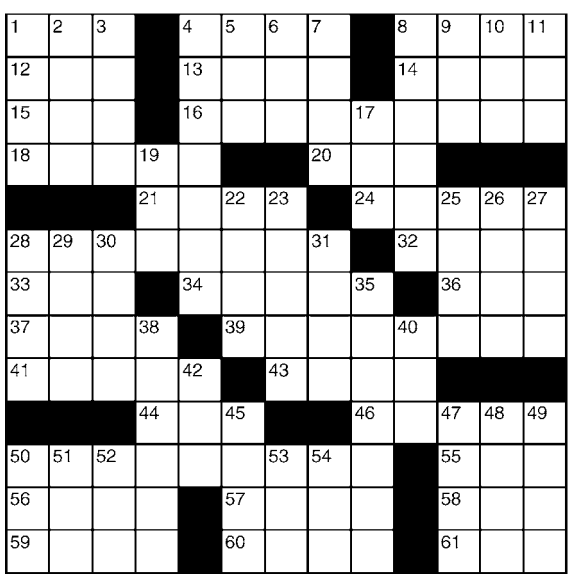
ACROSS
1 Automaton, for short
4 Siestas
8 Do as you're told
12 "— Town"
13 October birthstone
14 Base runner's goal
15 Expert
16 Persistent
18 Wheat bundle
20 Court
21 Freeway exit
24 Knighted women
28 Courteous
32 Shaving mishap
33 Conger, for one
34 Portrayals
36 Lanka lead-in
37 Creche trio
39 Roomy
41 Viewpoint
43 Use a teaspoon
44 Comedian Caesar
46 Pepé Le Pew, e.g.
50 Having a huge appetite
55 Brooch
56 Pizzeria fixture
57 Mediocre
58 Inseparable
59 Greet silently
60 Burn somewhat
61 Fresh

DOWN
1 Slithery squeezers
2 "That hurts!"
3 Shade provider
4 "You cheated!"
5 Mimic
6 Zero-star review
7 Cabbage salad
8 Buckeye
9 Hallowe'en cry
10 Ostrich's cousin
11 "Of course"
17 Massachusetts cape
19 Joan of —
22 Bovine conversation
23 Tooth tissues
25 Soybean paste
26 Beige
27 Vail equipment
28 Lapidary's wares
29 Authentic
30 Agar source
31 Membership
35 Cut
38 Mad
40 Annoy
42 — -tac-toe
45 Platter
47 Atop
48 Morning hour
49 Recognized
50 Solemn promise
51 Eggs
52 Gun the engine
53 Sound of awe
54 "Born in the —"

Solution time: 21 mins.

D	R	A	B	■	D	A	M	P	■	D	E	B
I	N	T	O	■	A	L	O	E	■	I	L	L
S	A	M	W	A	L	T	O	N	■	M	A	O
■	■	■	O	R	E	O	■	A	G	E	N	T
A	C	T	U	P	■	■	A	N	O	N	■	■
M	O	R	T	■	S	A	M	C	O	O	K	E
I	L	O	■	E	E	R	I	E	■	V	E	E
S	A	M	S	N	E	A	D	■	F	E	E	L
■	■	B	A	L	D	■	■	S	E	L	L	S
E	C	O	L	I	■	S	A	I	L	■	■	■
V	A	N	■	S	A	M	B	R	O	W	N	E
E	K	E	■	T	R	U	E	■	N	E	A	R
R	E	S	■	S	E	T	S	■	Y	E	G	G

Yesterday's answer 10-1



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jay Underwood, 40; Esai Morales, 46; Randy Quaid, 58; Julie Andrews, 73

Happy Birthday: Your determination will grab the attention of those watching your progress this year. Don't stop short of your goals. There will be unexpected changes in your personal life that will be for the best. It should be a great ride into the future if you focus and are forward-thinking. Your numbers are 3, 8, 13, 16, 25, 38, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You won't be able to make a move or change anything without communication. Use your intuition to help you make the right choices. Someone has a greater interest in you than you realize. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Get out and enjoy the company of someone you admire. The interaction you have with good friends will result in a closer relationship and possibly a love connection. Someone who likes your style will have an offer you must consider. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Turn on your Gemini charm and dazzle everyone with your ideas and plans for the future. Don't let someone negative ruin your mood. Be inventive and aggressive when it comes to career moves and network as much as possible. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Socialize and you will meet new people. Someone you already know may become jealous if you show interest in someone you just met. Just be honest about your intentions and your friendships. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Get out with friends who understand your predicament. Talk about what's bothering you in order to find a solution. A love issue may cause stress and anxiety if you let it fester. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You can share a memorable time with someone dear to you if you make the effort to visit, regardless of the distance. Whether it's a jaunt to unfamiliar territory or a trip back in time, you will benefit. This is an ideal time for love and adventure. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You may feel like arguing in order to get your way but, in the end, you will lose out. Don't let an old lover make a mess of your current life. There is more to a relationship than chemistry. Be smart this time around. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Someone is withholding information. Be careful not to give away secrets. If you want to stay on top, observe and be mysterious while incorporating new methods, concepts and ideas into your plans. Don't slow down when you need to speed up. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Take a serious look at your lifestyle and consider what you can do to safeguard against bad habits, illness and instability with friendships. If you don't nurture what you've got, you may lose out emotionally, financially or personally. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Falling for someone you work with may be dicey but it can work if handled the right way. Don't sneak around. You are likely to upset some people, but if you are honest, everything will work to your benefit. A creative move will ensure success. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't let friendships or people you look up to cost you financially. Collect money that is owed and finalize settlements that will help you move forward and pursue new goals. Nothing is out of reach. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): If you make a promise, follow through. By sticking to your work, you will build a following that can help you achieve your goals. Don't waffle—shoot straight and you will be treated with respect. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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Birthday Baby: You are intense, determined and do well with family, friends and peers. You are a creative speaker who is aggressive but diplomatic.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1	6							
3		2						
	8		3		9			
		6		1		3		
			4			8	9	
		9						7
			8	6		9		2
				7				1
					1	4	5	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/01

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	6	7	5	2	8	4	1	9
2	4	8	6	9	1	7	3	5
5	9	1	4	7	3	8	6	2
4	8	5	7	3	6	2	9	1
1	3	2	9	8	4	6	5	7
6	7	9	1	5	2	3	4	8
8	2	6	3	1	5	9	7	4
9	1	4	8	6	7	5	2	3
7	5	3	2	4	9	1	8	6

Difficulty Level ★★ 9/30

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE ROSETTA STONE **Solution: 9 letters**

L	S	R	E	T	T	E	L	E	G	A	S	S	A	P
I	H	D	A	E	R	L	G	U	E	S	S	A	T	R
N	O	E	L	O	P	A	N	N	H	E	D	R	S	I
T	A	C	S	E	B	U	T	R	N	E	A	I	A	N
E	R	I	G	N	G	G	I	K	H	C	G	N	O	C
R	A	P	D	R	O	N	C	S	E	N	U	O	C	I
P	H	H	E	A	E	I	I	Ⓔ	S	A	M	I	H	P
R	P	E	L	S	H	L	T	Ⓡ	O	M	E	L	A	L
E	K	R	L	T	B	I	O	Ⓐ	L	E	A	L	R	E
T	T	U	E	U	M	T	C	Ⓡ	L	S	N	O	A	S
A	H	L	P	E	G	L	E	I	D	S	I	P	C	T
T	G	E	S	D	N	U	O	F	T	S	N	M	T	U
I	I	R	F	R	A	M	E	D	S	P	G	A	E	D
O	E	S	S	L	A	I	C	I	F	F	O	H	R	Y
N	H	I	E	R	O	G	L	Y	P	H	I	C	S	T

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Champollion, Characters, Coast, Coptic, Decipher, Found, Framed, Greek, Guess, Height, Hieroglyphic, Interpretation, Letters, Lords, Lose, Meaning, Multilingual, Names, Napoleon, Officials, Passage, Pharaohs, Principles, Published, Rare, Read, Rulers, Shrines, Signs, Spelled, Study, Thickness, Time, Trace, Translations, Tube

Yesterday's Answer: Cylinders

Treasury 5 Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

CUPSLIPSLIPSLIPLIP

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Saipan Tribune

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: **PSS-072-2006 (Amendment/Re-Announcement V)**
Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
Position Title: **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**
Pay Level/Step: **UNGRADED** Per Annum Salary: **$50,000.00 - $ 65,000.00**
Opening Date: **August 20, 2008, 2008** Closing Date: **October 11, 2008**
Location: **PSS, OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays

Minimum Requirements:
Graduation from a US accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Finance, Accounting or related field of study plus five (5) years work experience and must hold a valid licensure as a Certified Public Accountant; **OR** Master's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Finance, Accounting or related field of study plus five (5) years related work experience.

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

Announcement No: **PSS-073-2006 (Amendment/Re-Announcement III)**
Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
Position Title: **ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**
Pay Level/Step: **UNGRADED** Per Annum Salary: **$50,00.00-$65,000.00**
Opening Date: **August 20, 2008** Closing Date: **October 11, 2008**
Location: **PSS – OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays

Minimum Requirements:
Graduation from a US accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Education Administration or related areas, plus at least five (5) years of progressively responsible teaching or education administration experience.

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING; THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, and TEL. #. (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.

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Ramirez slams White Sox into playoff with Twins

CHICAGO (AP)—Alexei Ramirez spread his arms wide, raced around the bases like a little kid and jumped into Paul Konerko's embrace at home plate. No wonder they were so happy. The White Sox would play one more day.

Ramirez set a rookie record with his fourth grand slam of the season, and Chicago beat Detroit 8-2 in a rainout makeup Monday, forcing a one-game tiebreaker against Minnesota for the AL Central title.

The Twins will visit the White Sox on Tuesday night, with John Danks starting for Chicago on three days' rest against Nick Blackburn. The division champ begins the playoffs at Tampa Bay on Thursday.

"Tomorrow, 162 games mean nothing. It's only about one game and that's great," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said. "A good feeling."

When Guillen told Ramirez to relax before batting with the bases loaded, the 27-year-old infielder made a promise.

"I told Ozzie to have confidence in me. I'm going to go out and get these runners home somehow," he said.

Did he ever. Then again, his days on the Cuban national team taught him about big games.

"My team in Cuba was always in the playoffs and I played in the Olympics and international games. I've been in tougher situations, I feel," he said through a translator.

Washed out earlier this month, Chicago and Detroit waited through a rain delay of more than three hours before starting. Gavin Floyd (17-8) won on three days' rest—short rest has been successful trend for many teams in the stretch.

AP

Chicago White Sox's Alexei Ramirez reacts to his grand slam during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Detroit Tigers in Chicago, Monday, Sept. 29, 2008.

The loss left the Tigers in last place, capping a season they began with hopes of reaching the World Series.

"It's been a tough year," manager Jim Leyland said. "Today pretty much sums up what's gone on all year, really. It hasn't been a very good year and it wasn't a very happy ending."

Detroit, with nothing really to play for, took a 2-1 lead into the sixth. But former White Sox ace Freddy Garcia, who'd allowed only two hits to that point, had to leave with tightness in his right shoulder with a runner on second and no outs.

When Garcia left, things got wild.

Leyland summoned Armando Galarraga (13-7)—the team's best starter this season—and he threw two wild pitches that allowed the tying run to score.

After Jermaine Dye walked, Bobby Seay relieved and threw Detroit's third wild pitch of the inning.

Jim Thome struck out, but after an intentional walk to Konerko, Seay also walked Ken Griffey Jr. to load the bases.

Ramirez sent the first pitch from Gary Glover, another former White Sox pitcher, into the left-center field bleachers, setting off a happy trip around the bases for the rookie whose nickname is "The Cuban Missile."

Floyd gave up five hits and one earned in six innings. He struck out eight and walked two while throwing 118 pitches.

"He admitted he was nervous, which was good because if you're not nervous in that situation, there's something wrong with you," White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski said. "He didn't have his best stuff but he battled and made pitches when he had to to get through it."

Pierzynski added an RBI double during a two-run eighth.

Floyd's error helped Detroit take a 2-1 lead in the sixth. Miguel Cabrera doubled with one out before Marcus Thames hit a hard liner that White Sox third baseman Juan Uribe snagged for the second out.

When Ryan Raburn hit a slow roller between the plate and mound, Floyd bobbled the ball while reaching down to pick it up and threw high past Konerko at first, allowing Cabrera to score.

Chicago scored in the first but had a much bigger inning brewing when the first three batters reached against Garcia. He walked Orlando Cabrera and DeWayne Wise before Dye hit an RBI single, but retired the next three batters.

Detroit tied it in the fifth as Raburn singled, stole second and scored when Brandon Inge doubled to left over the leaping Wise.

After his early struggles, Garcia rebounded, retiring 11 straight before Griffey singled with two outs in the fourth.

Garcia was 40-21 with Chicago from 2004-06 and won three games in the postseason of 2005, including the clinching Game 4 of the World Series. He is close friends with White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen and they texted each other leading up to the game.

Guillen warned that the White Sox had better "be ready for Freddy."

Garcia was traded to the Phillies after the 2006 season for Gio Gonzalez and Floyd, and both of the starters wore jersey No. 34 on Monday. Garcia, who had shoulder surgery in August 2007, signed a minor league contract with the Tigers on Aug. 14 of this year and was making his third start for Detroit.

Marbury ready to play, and he doesn't care where

GREENBURGH, N.Y. (AP)—Stephon Marbury doesn't care. He says the New York Knicks can get rid of him. In remarks filled with contradictions and accusations Monday, the point guard stressed that the team's problems last year went well beyond him.

"I was being blamed for losses and I wasn't even playing," Marbury said.

The Knicks didn't win with him, and they couldn't win without him. As they prepare to open their first training camp under Mike D'Antoni on Tuesday in Saratoga Springs, it's still not clear which way they'll try to do it this season.

And that's fine with Marbury, who is entering the final year of a contract that will pay him more than $21 million.

"It doesn't matter whatever they do, because basketball-wise, I'm ready," he said. "So it doesn't matter to me. As long as I'm playing basketball, that's the most important thing.

"I have no feelings of what they're doing, it doesn't matter to me. Because once I get on the basketball court, I'll show what I can do and that'll be that. And if they feel like they have plans to do something differently, that's OK. I understand that it's a business and I'm not taking it personally at all."

Marbury was limited to 24 games last season, the worst of his career. He missed games for a variety of reasons, from a dispute with former coach Isiah Thomas to his father's death, before shutting it down for the season in January following ankle surgery.

He's fully recovered now and has slimmed down, honoring new president Donnie Walsh's mandate to get in the best shape possible. That still might not be good enough to earn him another season in New York.

Though Walsh has never publicly said so, it's been speculated since his arrival in April that he would waive or trade Marbury before the season. He doesn't have a better option at point guard, but with Marbury having alienated teammates and his hometown fans with his behavior over the last few seasons, the popular belief was that the Knicks would be better off without him.

Marbury couldn't point to anything he would change about last season and didn't even acknowledge a fallout with Thomas—though he blew off an early-season game after a disagreement over his role. But Marbury seems to recognize the damage he's done to his reputation.

"I'm every disease that you could possibly think of," Marbury said. "So for me, I just want to approach it with playing basketball at a high level and I want to be able to change the way people think."

Walsh signed Chris Duhon over the summer, and he's the favorite to start at point guard if Marbury is moved. Duhon said he's prepared to fight for his spot, even if many think it's going to be handed to him.

"I came here to compete for a starting job, the opportunity to change an organization around back to where it should be as far as winning, and that's all my main focus is," Duhon said. "I've never been the guy that wanted things given to me, so I always wanted to go out and prove my worth and that I should be a guy that plays significant minutes. So that's what I'm going to do."

Marbury has the same plan. After repeatedly saying he didn't care if he left, he later said he wanted to win a championship in New York—even if it was after this year. Walsh and D'Antoni have both said he'll be given a chance in camp, not wanting to judge any players without seeing them in D'Antoni's system.

Still confident at 31 that he can play at the level that earned him two All-Star berths, Marbury expects to quiet his critics—in New York or elsewhere.

"I'm going to play basketball and I'm going to play at a high level," Marbury said. "So it doesn't matter to me. As long as I get on the court and once I get my opportunity, that's it. Watch me play this year."

NBA BRIEFS

Mavs' Howard apologizes for last 5 months

DALLAS (AP)—Mavericks forward Josh Howard has apologized for disrespecting the national anthem and "everything that's happened in the last five months." The team's second-leading scorer behind Dirk Nowitzki focused Monday on expressing remorse for his comments about the anthem during a YouTube video. And he also apologized for other off-court problems, which include a July arrest after police said he was drag racing at 94 mph in a 55 mph zone and his admission in a radio interview that he smokes marijuana. Howard, who averaged 19.9 points last season, made his statement and took questions from reporters on the first day of Mavericks training camp.

Jefferson says knee will be ready in 2 weeks

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Minnesota Timberwolves forward Al Jefferson says he's "feeling wonderful" just a couple weeks after spraining his right knee during a workout with teammates. Jefferson was moving around fine during the team's media day on Monday and says he plans to do plenty of running and some light work when the team gathers in Mankato for training camp on Tuesday. But he probably won't be doing any contact drills for another week or two. Jefferson was injured when point guard Blake Ahearn fell into his knee. Jefferson says he heard a pop and "thought it was all over." But it turned out to be just a sprain, and Jefferson says he can't wait to join his teammates in practice. Mankato is the hometown of owner Glen Taylor.

Miami Heat GM Randy Pfund resigns

MIAMI (AP)—Miami general manager Randy Pfund, who helped the Heat win the 2006 NBA championship as the highlight of his 13 years with the franchise, resigned Monday. Pfund has chosen to pursue "other business opportunities," the Heat said in a release. Team president Pat Riley will assume Pfund's duties. Pfund was expected to release a statement further detailing his decision Tuesday, the team said.

Reed's FG gives Steelers OT win over Ravens

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Jeff Reed kicked a 46-yard field goal in overtime and the Pittsburgh Steelers overcame a 10-point deficit, numerous injuries and a late Baltimore comeback to outlast the Ravens 23-20 on Monday night.

Reed's third field goal ended a back-and-forth game in which the Steelers (3-1) were down by 10 late in the third quarter, rallied but couldn't hold a seven-point lead, then found a way to win despite being without their top three running backs.

Pittsburgh came back to win despite losing two players to season-ending injuries, running back and first-round draft pick Rashard Mendenhall (fractured shoulder) and right guard Kendall Simmons (right Achilles). Both will be placed on injured reserve, coach Mike Tomlin said.

The Ravens (2-1), losing for the seventh time in their last eight games in Pittsburgh and falling out of the AFC North lead, won the important overtime coin toss but were backed up by two penalties and a sack and Sam Koch had to punt out of the end zone.

Then, on third-and-8, Ben Roethlisberger found fourth-string running back Mewelde Moore—playing only because of the injuries—on a key 24-yard swing pass for a first down at the Ravens' 31. On third-and-14, Moore made a 7-yard catch to the 28 to give Reed the extra yardage he needed to make it.

"That was important—a 46-yarder there isn't a given, and a 53-yarder isn't easy," Reed said. "I get too much credit. My foot won it, but that's what I'm supposed to do in that situation."

Moore said, "Coach Tomlin told me when I came here I'd be his minute man, that I had to be ready on a minute's notice. Everything he said held true."

The Steelers turned the 10-point deficit into a 17-13 lead in a 15-second span in the third quarter, only to have rookie quarterback Joe Flacco of the Ravens hit Derrick Mason for 35 yards ahead of Le'Ron McClain's 2-yard TD run that tied it at 20 with 4:02 remaining.

Before then, Pittsburgh appeared to have overcome three mostly dreadful quarters in a momentum-turning span of three plays, and Reed added a 19-yard field goal to make it 20-13.

The Steelers, booed by their own fans while held without a touchdown for eight quarters since the second period of a 10-6 win in Cleveland on Sept. 14, finally awoke late in the third by going to a no-huddle offense with Roethlisberger lined up in a shotgun formation.

They resorted to the no-huddle almost by necessity, with Mendenhall out and Pro Bowl runner Willie Parker (knee) not in uniform.

AP

Pittsburgh Steelers kicker Jeff Reed, right, kicks the game-winning field goal out of the hold by Mitch Berger in overtime against the Baltimore Ravens in an NFL football game in Pittsburgh, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008.

With only one first down since the first quarter, the Steelers got a second when Baltimore's Jarret Johnson unwisely drew a personal foul penalty for an out-of-bounds hit following Nate Washington's 8-yard run. With his best field position since the first quarter, Roethlisberger - sacked and harassed by Baltimore's defense most of the game - found Santonio Holmes for a 38-yard touchdown pass three plays later on a third-and-4. Roethlisberger was 14-of-24 for 191 yards and was sacked three times.

On Baltimore's next play after the kickoff, Flacco—who had impeccably managed the game until then in only his third career start—fumbled while being sacked by James Harrison, Woodley scooped up the ball and scored from the 7, after initially attempting to fall on the ball.

"Then I remembered it wasn't college and I could run, and I don't have a lot of speed but I got in there," Woodley said.

Flacco, who was 16-of-31 for 192 yards, said, "I'm proud of the way we came back and tied the game up. I thought we did a good job of weathering what they threw at us. But I've got to take care of the ball."

Until that turnaround sequence, the Steelers' offensive malaise carried over from a dreary 15-6 loss in Philadelphia in which Roethlisberger was sacked eight times, threw an interception, lost a fumble and was dropped for a safety.

"We're resilient," Steelers receiver Hines Ward said. "There was no finger-pointing when we fell behind. We stayed together. I can't say enough about that group of running backs."

This time, the Steelers drove for Reed's 49-yard field goal on their opening possession, then could barely gain a yard until late in the third. Baltimore, beaten 38-7 in Pittsburgh last season, answered with field goals by Matt Stover of 33 and 20 yards before making it 13-3 on Flacco's first career TD pass, a 4-yarder to Daniel Wilcox with 17 seconds left before halftime.

Flacco, outplaying Roethlisberger for much of the game, set up the score with completions of 13 yards to Mason and 25 to McClain, who was in the game because starter Willis McGahee hurt his chest earlier in the 56-yard drive.

In a game filled with injuries, the Steelers also lost backup running back Carey Davis (ankle) and backup linebacker Andre Frazier, who was carted off the field on a stretcher with a spinal injury after being blocked by Haruki Nakamura during the opening kickoff. Frazier was immobilized before leaving the field, but appeared to be fine after the game.

Pittsburgh won its 14th consecutive Monday night home game, a streak that dates to a 1991 loss to the New York Giants at Three Rivers Stadium.

St. Louis Rams fire coach Scott Linehan, turn to Jim Haslett

ST. LOUIS (AP)—After experiencing the wild highs and lows of the Mike Martz years, the winless St. Louis Rams opted for cool, calm, reserved Scott Linehan as their next coach.

On Monday, they admitted their mistake and fired Linehan after four consecutive lopsided losses to open the season. Defensive coordinator Jim Haslett, a fiery type and polar opposite in terms of demeanor, was hired as interim coach, given the unenviable task of trying to revive a franchise that has become an NFL doormat.

The Rams have lost 17 of their last 20 games, most of them routs. But no matter how dire the situation appears, Haslett said it'll never be as bad as in his final season as head coach of the New Orleans Saints in 2005 in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"This is nothing," Haslett said, "compared to that."

Linehan, 45, was 11-25 in the third season of a four-year contract that paid him about $8 million. The Rams have been outscored 147-43 this season, and have allowed at least 30 points in seven straight games dating back to last year.

The move was made heading into the Rams' bye week and in the early morning hours Monday, several hours after the Buffalo Bills outscored them 25-0 in the second half of a 31-14 victory.

The Rams were 3-13 in 2007 and have lost eight in a row dating to last season. Dissension had been building after unsuccessful stabs by Linehan at a makeover: several new assistants; a remote training camp site; a higher-energy, upbeat delivery by the coach to project confidence and enthusiasm.

Linehan turned to desperation after the Rams were outscored 116-29 the first three games. Quarterback Marc Bulger, the highest-paid player in franchise history, was benched in favor of 38-year-old Trent Green. Starting cornerback Fakhir Brown, a Haslett favorite, was released and there were four other lineup changes.

Running back Steven Jackson ripped Linehan on his weekly radio show for benching Bulger, and there were reports Bulger no longer wanted to play for Linehan. Bulger has not spoken to media since the benching.

"He took 100 percent responsibility for the failures of this organization, but we're all culpable," owner Chip Rosenbloom said. "We all share in the responsibilities of losing games. That includes the coaches, it includes the players, it includes the administration, it includes the ownership."

That hints at more changes coming down the line. Jay Zygmunt, president of football operations and in his 27th year with the team, is drawing heat for poor draft-day performances. President John Shaw, who spends much of his time on the West Coast, is contemplating retirement after the season.

A sign at Sunday's home game read: "Congress. Now bail out the Rams."

Linehan briefly addressed players for about 10 minutes Monday morning before driving away from Rams Park without speaking to reporters or even making eye contact.

"He just told us that we're winners," said rookie defensive end Chris Long, Linehan's last first-round pick. "We're not winning right now, but there's winners in the room.

"He's going to do well, he's going to find a place where it's going right."

Given the Rams' weak play on defense, the 52-year-old Haslett is an unusual choice on the surface. He has head coaching experience, winning 45 games in six seasons for the Saints from 2000-05, but the defense is ranked 31st out of 32 teams despite a pair of young first-rounders, Long and Adam Carriker, on the line.

Typically blunt, the former NFL linebacker is far from pleased.

"Come on, the first three games we played poorly," Haslett said. "I thought we played pretty good yesterday. It's something we can build on."

Haslett was in bed when Rosenbloom telephoned at 1:15 a.m. Monday to offer the job, including a say in personnel matters. He expects to do a much better job in his second head coaching stint, and will be less secretive, too, opening practices to media. Rick Venturi, assistant head coach and linebackers coach, was elevated to defensive coordinator.

Haslett will convene his first team meeting Tuesday. He wants to discuss matters with the coaching staff before choosing a quarterback for the Rams' next game, Oct. 12 at Washington, and would like to re-sign Brown.

Haslett said the Rams' talent is comparable to that of the Bills, who are 4-0.

"They have a couple of things we don't have right now," Haslett said. "They've got great confidence, they've got great swagger, they've got poise and they think they can win. Right now we're not at that level."

The Linehan era will be remembered as a mostly dreary time for the franchise. Martz helped the Rams win their only Super Bowl after the 1999 season and then led them to a second Super Bowl as coach in the 2001 season with an offense known as the "Greatest Show on Turf."

The Rams were 8-8 in 2006, Linehan's first season, rallying to win four of their last six games after Linehan turned over play-calling duties to offensive coordinator Greg Olson. Numerous offensive line injuries, beginning with seven-time Pro Bowl tackle Orlando Pace's season-ending shoulder injury in the opener, paved the way for the 2007 disaster. Linehan again relinquished the play-calling before this season, replacing Olson with Al Saunders.

He knew his job was in jeopardy Sunday, having been put on notice by Rosenbloom. So he emptied the playbook, going for first downs twice on fourth down and using a handful of trick plays, energizing the team, but only for one half, when it led 14-6.

The firing was the second in-season coaching change by the Rams this decade. Martz was replaced by interim coach Joe Vitt after five games in 2005 due to medical reasons, and then was fired the day after the season.

The last Rams coach removed during the season for non-medical reasons was Bob Waterfield, replaced by Harland Svare after eight games in 1962 when the franchise was in Los Angeles.

SGA golfers reign in Kristo Rai fundraiser

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Golf Association members asserted their might in last weekend's 3rd Annual Kristo Rai Parish Golf Tournament at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort as five of them made it to the Top 3 in various flights.

Leading the list was Manny Alvarez, who ruled the Seniors Flight with his gross score of three-over par 75.

Actually, Alvarez was tied with fellow SGA member and former Superior Court judge Ed Manibusan for first, as the latter also fired a gross 75. But Alvarez defeated Manibusan on the tiebreak hole No. 8 with the former making an even on the par four hole against the latter's bogey.

Manibusan was relegated to second place with a one-shot lead against third placer Nick Sablan, who carded a gross four-over par 76.

Another SGA member who made his mark in the Kristo Rai tournament was A Flight top finisher Ray San Nicolas.

San Nicolas had a gross 79 to beat Ed Manglona (80) and Frank Castro (80).

Two other SGA members were runners-up in their respective division with Rick Kautz placing second in the centerpiece Championship Flight, and SGA president Martin Sablan in the C Flight.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
SGA member Rick Kautz, left, receives his Championship Flight runner-up trophy from Kristo Rai Church Parish Council president Joe Itibus in last week's award ceremony.

Kautz, who moved to the Championship Flight this year, after finishing first in the A Flight last year, showed consistency in his game, firing an even par 72 on the Kagman course.

Kautz started strong with a one-under par 35 on the front nine, before slowing down a bit on the back with a two-over par 37.

The SGA member was three shots ahead of third placer Joji Taguchi, who carded a three-over par 75. Micronesian Games gold medalist Jess Wabol prevailed in the Championship Flight with his impressive three-under par 69.

Sablan was runner-up to Jerry Ayuyu after the former drilled a gross 89, four strokes behind the latter's 85. Ruogi Takeshi shot a 90 to finish third.

Meanwhile, SGA will be holding its October Ace of the Month tournament on Oct. 19 with the time and venue to be announced later.

Registration for govt/ business softball ongoing

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Registration for the upcoming Inter-Government/ Business League Softball League is now ongoing, the Division of Sports and Recreation announced yesterday.

League coordinator Joey Dela Cruz said there would be two divisions—men's and women's—for this season to be held at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Organizers are inviting the private sector to participate in this annual tournament, which opening ceremony will be on Oct. 27.

The deadline of submission of entries and payment registration fee will be on Oct. 22 and entrance fee for both divisions is set at $400.

A total of 19 teams joined the previous tournament last April.

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs won both the men's and women's division titles.

DCCA's men's squad, which went undefeated in the regular season (18-0), scored a punishing 43-11 win against Aguaguat, while its women's team swept Northern Marianas College-Proa in their three-game series, 18-14, and 13-10, last April 11.

Aguaguat was the runner-up in the pennant race and placed second to DCCA in the championship. PSS placed third in the finals after losing to Aguaguat in the semifinals.

There will be three games per night, which will be held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday starting at 6:30pm for the first game, 7:30pm for the second game, and 8:30pm for the third game.

The league will be a single-round robin format with the Top 10 teams advancing to a double elimination second round format.

Dela Cruz said there would be a meeting of team representatives on Oct. 7 starting at 9:30am at the Ada Gym conference room.

Games for the women's division will be played every Monday and Friday starting at 7:30pm.

The regular season will be three rounds while the playoffs will be a double elimination affair.

NMI

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percent clip. The CNMI had 65 field goal attempts and made only 19 for 28.2 percent.

The CNMI cagebelles were playing Australia's Opals in their last game in Pool A.

The Commonwealth's women's team will still advance to the quarterfinals regardless of the results of their game against Australia.

But with a 0-2 record and likely to go down at 0-3, the CNMI cagebelles will be pitted against the No. 1 team in Pool B. Guam is likely to gain the top seeding in Pool B after pulling off a come-from-behind 67-57 win over Caledonia. The host also prevailed over Papua New Guinea, 77-56, and was playing Palau in their last pool game yesterday.

Fiji 69 – Moce 25, Oliver 15, Hazelman 15, L. Seru 6, Fifita 4, P. Seru 2, Singh 2.

CNMI 46 – Calvo 10, Wonenberg 8, Mesa 7, Rangamar 6, Diaz 6, Lebria 5, Hofschneider 3, Yvo. Bennett 1.

Scoring by quarters: 25-8, 39-25, 52-39, 69-46.

JUNIOR

From Page 28

The Junior Nationals finished third in Pool B and will play the No. 2 squad in Pool A in the quarterfinals. Tournament favorite Australia led Pool A with a 3-0 record, while Tahiti and Fiji are battling for the second spot.

Cruz finished with 30 points for the Junior Nationals on an 11-for-26 field goal shooting. He went 2-for-7 from downtown and had nine rebounds.

Three other CNMI players scored in double figures with Marvin Rabauliman and Jayvan Tarkong chipping in 16 apiece. Guam-based Bill Babauta contributed 10 markers.

Francis Dabin led New Caledonia's attack, drilling 30 markers. Two New Caledonia players had a double-double with Alexander Ha Ho recording 18 points and 10 rebounds and Beniela Adjougniope adding 17 points and 10 rebounds.

Thibault Cure and Paul-Emile Boawe had 16 apiece, while Brien-Jefrey Dassuie contributed 12 to complete New Caledonia's potent offensive firepower.

New Caledonia shot 10-for-22 from the 3-point area, while CNMI made only two of its 11 triple attempts.

New Caledonia also performed well from the 15-foot line, going 25-for-38 for a 65.8-percent clip. The CNMI was 18-for-34 from the free throw line, but held its ground against New Caledonia rebounders, getting 45 rebounds. The Junior Nationals defeated New Caledonia in the offensive rebound department, 27-17, before the latter redeemed themselves in the defensive end, 31-18.

The tournament will take a break today to give way to a 3-on-3 event.

New Caledonia 131 – Dabin 30, Ho 18, Adjougniope 17, Cure 16, Boawe 16, Bassuie 12, Verons 9, Sillant 6, Bourgade 4, Vakalepu 3.

CNMI 92 – Cruz 30, Rabauliman 16, Tarkong 16, Babauta 10, Tumaquip 7, Moses 4, Borja 4, White 3, Camacho 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-27, 56-41 89-63, 101-92.

GCA

From Page 28

must work as a team.

It was the fifth defeat for SDA in seven matches as it failed to duplicate its victory over Marianas Baptist Academy in its last game last Sept. 25.

In the high school division, the Eagles quickly raced to a 14-3 lead behind Luther Taylor's string of spikes coupled with good tosses from Bethanie Batallones and Denise Dass.

Also the booming serves of Anthony Borja, Angelo Salas, and D.M. Jeon as well as the consistent returns from big man Nathan Chargualaf were too much for SDA to counter.

Nearby at the Whispering Palms School volleyball court, the host Terns won anew at home against hard fighting Saipan Community School, 26-24, 25-14.

The win was WPS' third straight for a 5-1 win-loss record, while dealing SCS its sixth loss in seven outings.

SCS' lone victory against Mt. Carmel last Sept. 16, however, is still questionable because SCS did not wear their proper uniform in that particular game.

No decision from technical officials yet about this issue.

WPS coach Mark McDonald was happy for the team's performance.

He said the kids really want to play and that's what a team should be.

The Terns will visit SDA in their next game tomorrow, Oct. 2, and hope to keep their momentum going.

Despite the loss, SCS coaches Tamiko Winkfield and Jakie Vandam are happy with the way their students are playing.

They said they still have the chance if only they would base their assessment on this particular game.

"They have done so much. They really work hard in every game to improve their skill," Winkfield said.

She said she is proud of her kids for putting a good fight.

"They love to play," she said.

OBC

From Page 28

of the game.

Mordaunt was invited by the Northern Marianas Badminton Federation, which is seeking membership with the OBC.

NMBF president Marconi Calindas is coordinating with administrators of the various schools to give the young kids the opportunity to learn basic information about badminton as well as basic skills and techniques of the sport.

Mordaunt will be here from Oct. 1 to 12.

Badminton is a regular sport in the Olympic calendar. It is the No. 1 sport in Indonesia, where the best players in the world are from.

It is also popular in New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and China.

Badminton tournaments have also become a regular fixture in Palau.

From the CNMI, Mordaunt will also have an 11-day visit to Palau because the two Micronesian islands have shown a lot of interest in becoming a member of OBC.

Mordaunt's visit to Saipan is expected to pave the way for Saipan's inclusion into OBC.

Aside from promoting the sport to schoolchildren, Mordaunt will also conduct a workshop for badminton club members who wanted to become coach.

Mordaunt, who has been playing the game for 25 years, had previously conducted such visits to other Pacific countries like Fiji, Tuvalu, and Norfolk Islands.

Earlier, Mordaunt sent messages to the NMIBF about his excitement in visiting the CNMI.

He said his goal is to make sure to assist CNMI and Palau to sustainable in running the badminton association to enable them to develop their juniors and members.

He said the workshop would help a lot in the growth of the sport.

More coaches, he said, must be developed because they would help achieve such goal.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS (FINAL)

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Tampa Bay	97	65	.599	–
y-Boston	95	67	.586	2
New York	89	73	.549	8
Toronto	86	76	.531	11
Baltimore	68	93	.422	28 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	88	74	.543	–
Minnesota	88	74	.543	–
Cleveland	81	81	.500	7
Kansas City	75	87	.463	13
Detroit	74	88	.457	14

West Division

x-Los Angeles	100	62	.617	–
Texas	79	83	.488	21
Oakland	75	86	.466	24 1/2
Seattle	61	101	.377	39

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

x-Philadelphia	92	70	.568	–
New York	89	73	.549	3
Florida	84	77	.522	7 1/2
Atlanta	72	90	.444	20
Washington	59	102	.366	32 1/2

Central Division

x-Chicago	97	64	.602	–
y-Milwaukee	90	72	.556	7 1/2
Houston	86	75	.534	11
St. Louis	86	76	.531	11 1/2
Cincinnati	74	88	.457	23 1/2
Pittsburgh	67	95	.414	30 1/2

West Division

x-Los Angeles	84	78	.519	–
Arizona	82	80	.506	2
Colorado	74	88	.457	10
San Francisco	72	90	.444	12
San Diego	63	99	.389	21

Yesterday's Game
Chicago White Sox 8, Detroit 2

x-clinched division
y-clinched wild card

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	4	0	0	1.000	109	63
New England	2	1	0	.667	49	58
N.Y. Jets	2	2	0	.500	115	116
Miami	1	2	0	.333	62	64

South

Tennessee	4	0	0	1.000	102	46
Jacksonville	2	2	0	.500	79	85
Indianapolis	1	2	0	.333	52	67
Houston	0	3	0	.000	56	99

North

Pittsburgh	3	1	0	.750	77	58
Baltimore	2	1	0	.667	65	43
Cleveland	1	3	0	.250	46	78
Cincinnati	0	4	0	.000	52	87

West

Denver	3	1	0	.750	133	117
San Diego	2	2	0	.500	138	112
Oakland	1	3	0	.250	78	101
Kansas City	1	3	0	.250	65	97

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

N.Y. Giants	3	0	0	1.000	83	43
Washington	3	1	0	.750	86	81
Dallas	3	1	0	.750	120	89
Philadelphia	2	2	0	.500	110	74

South

Carolina	3	1	0	.750	80	70
Tampa Bay	3	1	0	.750	101	78
New Orleans	2	2	0	.500	111	100
Atlanta	2	2	0	.500	90	83

North

Green Bay	2	2	0	.500	109	101
Chicago	2	2	0	.500	94	80
Minnesota	1	3	0	.250	71	82
Detroit	0	3	0	.000	59	113

West

Arizona	2	2	0	.500	106	103
San Francisco	2	2	0	.500	94	97
Seattle	1	2	0	.333	77	80
St. Louis	0	4	0	.000	43	147

Yesterday's Game
Pittsburgh 23, Baltimore 20, OT

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

XTERRA Saipan, Tagaman postcards now available

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Free postcards that serve as an invitation and information material for next year's XTERRA Saipan Championships and the 20th Tagaman Triathlon and Taga Kids Triathlon are now available for interested individuals.

Taga Inc. president Wolf Mojica said the postcards can be picked up at the DFS Galleria Customer Information Center between 10:30am and 10:30pm seven days a week.

"It's a first-come, first-served offer because there are limited pieces," said Mojica, who works as the company's associate store manager for Boutique and Luxury Worlds.

The postcards feature top finishers in the 2008 XTERRA Saipan, defending women's champion Renata Bucher and runner-up Mieko Carey.

The two women are ready to join next month's world XTERRA Championships in Maui, Hawaii.

Incidentally, Mojica will attend the event and serve as a technical official for the 2008 XTERRA Championships. He will be joined by Taga Inc. founder and NMASA Hall of Famer Bill Sakovich.

The XTERRA Saipan Championship, considered the crown jewel of the XTERRA Global Tour, and the 19th Tagaman Triathlon, the longest-running endurance race in the western Pacific, will be held in back-to-back weekends in April.

The 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike, and 12-km run XTERRA Saipan Championship will be held on April 18. It will treat world class triathletes to a swim in the clear warm waters of the Philippine Sea, a bike on coral roads and single-track of Saipan, and a run through jungle and caves while passing World War II relics. The race starts and ends at Micro Beach.

The 2-km swim, 60-kim bike, and 15-km run Tagaman, meanwhile, begins at Pacific Islands Club and traverses the entire 15-mile length of the island of Saipan on April 25. Participants will swim the crystal clear waters of the southern end of the island off the Pacific Islands Resort and Hotel.

The bike race is a scenic course that traverses the entire length of the island.

The run is through the white sands of the western coastline, through the historic American Memorial Park and finish at Micro Beach.

Aside from the XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, the 2009 Saipan Sportsfest will also feature the annual Sophia Walk, an XTERRA bike race, and Taga Kids.

Rollers I snaps skid with win over Saints

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rollers I regained its winning form after whipping the Chalan Kanoa Saints, 60-44, in the 2008 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Rollers I had a 2-0 start in the Rotary caging and at one time was at the top of the team standings. But the Joe Diaz-mentored squad dropped its next two games before bouncing back against the Saints.

The victory tied the Rollers I with the G-Stars at fourth place.

Manny Matagolai led the Rollers I's third victory, nailing 18 points.

He made the first basket of the game and added six more points, as the Rollers I took control of the first half, posting a 28-15 lead.

Luizi Reyes scored seven of the Saints' 15 first half points but failed to get contributions from his teammates.

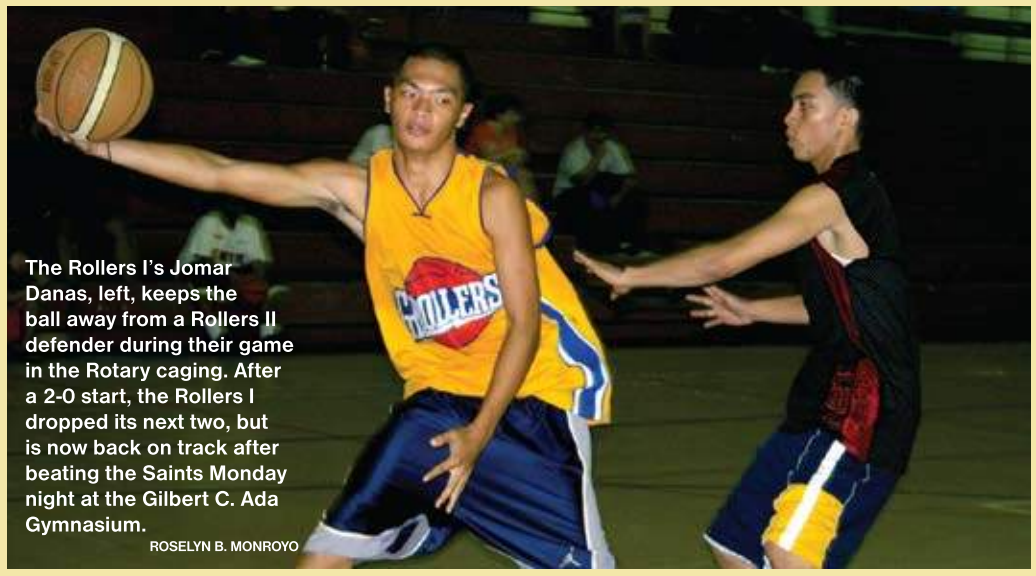
In contrast, the Rollers I besides Matagolai had four other players making it to the scoreboard.

Matagolai picked up where he left of the in the second half, drilling the Rollers I's first eight points in that period.

The Rollers I's supporting cast continued backing up Matagolai en route to giving their team an easy win.

Jomar Danas, J.R. Concepcion, Don Teregeyo, and Rainier Deleon Guerrero combined for 27 points for the Rollers I.

Luizi Reyes and Joshua Lizama paced the Saints with 13 points apiece, while former Rollers I player Zack Tudela chipped in 12. The rest of the Saints bench tallied only six markers.



The Rollers I's Jomar Danas, left, keeps the ball away from a Rollers II defender during their game in the Rotary caging. After a 2-0 start, the Rollers I dropped its next two, but is now back on track after beating the Saints Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Saints absorbed their sixth loss in seven games and are hoping to end the regular season on a winning note when they face the Kontenders tomorrow.

Despite a 1-6 record, the Saints are already assured of a slot in the playoffs.

Only the Top 8 teams will make it to the next round and joining the Saints in the playoffs are the Southern Sonics, San Antonio Sixers, CNMI Junior Nationals, G-Stars, Rollers I, Kontenders, and the Suns.

The Rollers II were eliminated last week after a dismal 0-8 record in this year's 18-and-under caging.

Meanwhile, the G-Stars game against the Suns yesterday was called off due to the absence of G-Stars coach Jose Tumaquip.

Tumaquip is in Guam coaching the CNMI Women's Junior Nationals in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament.

The G-Stars two remaining games along with the CNMI Junior Nationals' last two matches will be put on hold until next week.

The CNMI Junior Nationals of coach Rufino Aguon is also in Guam competing in the FIBA Oceania caging.

Rollers I 60 – Matagolai 18, Danas 8, Concepcion 8, Teregeyo 6, Deleon Guerrero 5, Namelo 4, A. Camacho 3, E. Camacho 2, Babauta 2, Paez 2.

Saints 44 – Reyes 13, Lizama 13, Tudela 12, Masga 4, Basa 2.

Scoring by halves: 28-15, 60-44.

Leaders keep track in electronic darts

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

There were no changes among the top division leaders after last Thursday's round in the ongoing 2008 Saipan Electronic Darts Association League held in different venues.

The Oleai Black Stallion improved their record to 63 wins against 39 losses to pace the Masters Division.

Oleai D'Companeros stayed in second place with 59-43, while Oleai Heavy Bombers are in third with 45-57 and VFW Chubby Wockees are fourth with 37-65.

Utopia 4 Corners are still maintaining the league's most number of wins earned with their 69-33 record to tow the rest of the field in the A-Division.

D'Pirates D-Destroyers are running second with 61-41, while VFW Major Leaks are third with 59-43. Sierra's Shakem-Up (49-53), Vargas Snipers (42-60), and Primos Seki D'Umber (26-76).

In Tuesday-B division, Oleai No Fear remained on top with a 56-34 record.

However, there was a shake-up in the standings for the next four teams with Primo's Pay Day Time improving their record to 54-36 to move up to second from third and relegating Krystal (52-38) to third from second.

Also climbing up from fifth to fourth was Primo's Naughty Boys (51-39) while Jonny's Insane Dart Posse (48-42) skidded to fifth from fourth.

Jonny's Fujin remained in sixth with 43-47, D'Pirates B Destroyers seventh with 32-58 and Jonny's Samurai eighth with 24-66.

Utopia Hotshots further tightened their lead in the Thursday-B Division with 61-29. The others were Primo's Warriors (44-31), Len's Lights Out (41-34), Oleai Get Er Done (41-34), D'Pirates Dart Knights (39-51), Coral Reef B-Barracuda (37-38), Oleai Shooters (34-41), The Flair Sakude Umbre (33-42), and Naked Fish Naked Boyz (30-45).

Naked Fish Unagas kept pace with a 54-36 standing in the C-Division. VFW Clubmates (43-47), Jonny's Asian Dart Heads (43-47), Gaia Bonzai (41-49), Naked Fish Hafa Mas (39-36), Remington Dart Vador (37-38), Coral Reef Barracuda (37-38), Primo's No Expectations (35-40), and Coral Reef Shark Attack (31-44).

In the Ladies Division, Naked Fish Naked Shooters compiled 53 wins and 22 losses to maintain their lead while Oleai B-52's are in second with 37-23.

Jonny's.com leapt from fifth to third with 32-43, while Coral Reef Mermaids dropped to fourth with 30-45 and Coral Reef Sting Rays were relegated to fifth with a 28-47 win-loss mark.

Flores sets score to beat for RGA October Ace

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Sonny Flores ruled the Refaluwach Golf Association October Ace qualifying tournament held Sunday at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Flores shot a net 65 in the qualifier, setting the score to beat in RGA's next tournament. If his score is unbeaten, Flores gets to keep the RGA October Ace title.

The 15-handicapper Flores had a good start at the Agingan Point course firing a 3-over par 39 on the front. But he failed to sustain his momentum on the back, scoring a five-over par 41 for a gross 80.

Flores won by a stroke against Louie Tilipao, a 12-handicapper, who nailed a 39 on both nines for a gross 78.

There was a three-way tie for third with Joe Wabol prevailing in the tiebreak with his net 33.5 on the front nine.

The 21-handicapper Wabol tallied a 44 and 47 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a net 70 and gross 91.

Also making a net 71 was Tars Olopai, an 11-handicapper. But Olopai dropped to fourth, as he recorded a net 37.5 on the front. Olopai shot a gross 81 following his 43 and 38 on the front and back nines, respectively.

Dwain Stephens was the third player to score a net 70, but settled for fifth place after his net 38 on the front nine. The 20-handicapper Stephens, drilled a 48 on the front and played better on the back wit a 42 for a gross 90.

The lowest gross score of the day belonged to Jess Wabol and Nick Sablan, who both carded five-over par 77.

The two-handicapper Jess Wabol had a 39 on the front and improved his game a bit on the back with a 38 for a net 75. Sablan, a six-handicapper, fired a 38 and 39 on the front and back nines, for a net 71.

Fourteen RGA members joined last weekend's qualifier.

The list included Manny Mangarero (71), Joe Demapan (71), Fasulu Tigilao (71), Ed Tenorio (72), Jordan Kossam (76), Tom Tebuteb (77), and Tony Rogolifoi (77).

Mangarero won the closest to the pin contest on hole No. 3, while Tenorio prevailed on No. 14.

Meanwhile, tournament director Jess Wabol is reminding monthly Ace winners to meet the required number of tournaments before they are allowed to compete in the yearend Club Championship in December.

Monthly Ace winners should join at least six qualifying tournaments or RGA-sanctioned events to gain tickets to the season-ending RGA Cup.

Wabol is also reminding players of two tournaments lined up in RGA's calendar.

He said they will be holding the RGA Memorial Classic on Nov. 8 with the venue to be announced later.

Members who will participate in the November tournament will gain free entrance fee in the club championships in December.

Before the Club Championship, RGA will be holding a Family Fun Day on Dec. 13.

For more information on RGA tournaments, contact Jess Wabol at 233-3673 or RGA president Adam Hardwicke at 483-2326.

Rollers I snaps skid with win over Saints

The Rollers I regained its winning form after whipping the Chalan Kanoa Saints, 60-44, in the 2008 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Ramirez slams White Sox into playoff with Twins

Alexei Ramirez spread his arms wide, raced around the bases like a little kid and jumped into Paul Konerko's embrace at home plate. No wonder they were so happy. The White Sox would play one more day. 24

NMI cagebelles play better in loss to Fiji

By ROSELYN B MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI Women's Junior Nationals put on a decent show in their second game in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament Monday night at the University of Guam Fieldhouse in Mangilao.

The CNMI cagebelles bowed to Fiji, 46-69, but their second game in the tournament was much better than their debut Sunday morning. The CNMI bets were routed by Tahiti, 30-101.

Against Tahiti, the CNMI had only four players scoring. But when they played Fiji, the CNMI cagebelles had more confidence in their shots resulting in eight players contributing on the team's offense.

Noelle Calvo top-scored for the CNMI with 10 points, on a 4-for-14 field goal shooting. Jacque Wonenberg, who did not score against Tahiti, had eight against Fiji. Wonenberg shot better on the field, hitting 4-for-7, and collared eight rebounds.

Mercedes Mesa recorded 3-for-4 field goal shooting, adding seven points, while Lia Rangamar and Dion Diaz chipped in six apiece. Nicole Lebria contributed five, Nikita Hofschneider had three, and Yvonne Benett made a free throw.

Playing more relax in their second match, the CNMI cagebelles even outscored Fiji in two quarters.

Fiji took early control of the game, nailing a 25-8 lead after the first period.

But the CNMI Women's Junior Nationals began hitting their marks in the second period, firing 17 points against Fiji's 15.

In the third period, the CNMI cagebelles had another double figure output, scoring 14. Fiji had 13 points, but still took a 52-39 lead, entering the final canto.

The CNMI Women's Junior Nationals slowed down in the fourth period, making only seven points, while Fiji was on target, firing 17 points en route to a 23-point win.

Meleane Mose paced Fiji with 25 points, while Cecelia Oliver and Brittany Hazelman scored 15 apiece.

Fiji out-rebounded the CNMI, 49-22, but had more turnovers than the Commonwealth's players, 18-14. Fiji had a better field goal shooting, going 31-for-74 for a 40.8-

See NMI on Page 26

EDUARDO C. SIGUENZA
The CNMI's Nicole Lebria is sandwiched by two Fijian defenders during their game in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament Monday night at the University of Guam Fieldhouse.

Junior Nationals lose shootout with New Caledonia

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Guns were blazing in the CNMI-New Caledonia game in the Men's Pool B of the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament yesterday at the University of Guam Fieldhouse with the French colony prevailing in the shootout, 131-92.

The CNMI Junior Nationals traded baskets with New Caledonia in the first quarter with Jericho Cruz mostly on the firing end.

At the end of the first period, the CNMI cagers were still in contention, trailing by only three, 27-30.

But the next three quarters showed New Caledonia having more firepower in its arsenal, outgunning CNMI. The winning team outscored the Commonwealth in the second by 12 points, 26-14, to break the game wide open and take a 56-41 halftime lead.

In the third period, New Caledonia was still busy burning the hoops, firing 33 points against CNMI's 22 markers.

New Caledonia saved the best for last, exploding for 42 points in the fourth period. The CNMI had their most productive output in the final quarter, making 29 points, but it was not enough to save the Junior Nationals from dropping to a 1-2 record.

The Rufino Aguon-mentored squad's lone win in the pool play was against Papua New Guinea Monday night, 93-84.

See JUNIOR on Page 26

Mordaunt

OBC officer starts 11-day visit in CNMI

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Oceania Badminton Confederation regional development manager Tony Mordaunt will arrive today for an 11-day visit that includes a coaching clinic and a tour to several schools on Saipan to share his skills and knowledge

See OBC on Page 26

GCA keeps win streak vs SDA

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Host Grace Christian outsmarted visiting Seventh Day Adventist in both junior varsity and high school divisions yesterday in the resumption of games in the 2008 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball tournament.

The Eagles remained undefeated in both divisions after easily winning in straight sets over SDA, 25-17, 25-4 and 25-14, 25-9, in the junior varsity and high school divisions, respectively.

The Eagles are now 7-0 in junior varsity and 6-0 in high school.

Coach Mark Robles expressed elation about his players' winning streak but told them not to be overconfident at this point because it's a long way to go in the double-elimination format.

He said they need more practice and

See GCA on Page 26

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
GCA Eagles big man Nathan Chargualaf scores with a high-flying spike in this bit of action that keyed his team's first set win over visiting SDA yesterday at home in the 2008 COPSSA volleyball league.